

**TRANSITIONS
TO EMPLOYMENT
FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES**

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For
MUM AND DAD

I may take you for granted,
Not showing that I care.
Finding it hard to let you know,
That deep inside, my feelings stir.

Aware that you are patient.
Knowing that you give, but don't take.
I want right now to let you know,
My love for you is sure not fake.

and for **CHARLOT**
my friend, my love, my future...

from Nadette

For
MY FAMILY
And
MARCO

who encouraged and supported me
during they years I have spent
at the University.

from Karen.

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Nadette Camilleri

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ABSTRACT

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TRANSITIONS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

This study explores in detail what kind of transition programmes, schools at secondary level, special schools, and employment and service agencies at local level, are providing for students with disabilities. Interviews were conducted in order for the authors to identify the elements which lead to successful transitions to work. During the data collection, persons with disabilities, facilitators, guidance teachers, transitions co-ordinators, job coaches, ability promoters, and employers were interviewed. Case studies were conducted, where focus groups discussions were held. During a typical discussion, the authors would meet with a person with disability, a job coach or an ability promoter, a support worker, and the parents, for the purpose of discussing the person with disability's transition to employment. The findings show that schools at secondary level are not conducting a transition programmes to employment for students with disabilities. Special schools are offering a type of transition program, which takes place when the students reach their final year at school. The employment and service agencies, which were contacted are currently carrying out transition programmes for some students. From the information, which was retrieved, the authors suggest transition-planning guides, which can be used to enable successful transitions to employment to happen.

Supervisor

B. Ed. (Hons.)

Ms. Billie Nightingale

May, 2001

**TRANSITIONS
SECONDARY**

**INCLUSIVE
WORKPLACE**

EDUCATION

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IEP	Individual Education Programme
ITP	Individual Transition Programme
ETC	Employment and Training Corporation

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Chapter One

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation studies local transition programmes aimed at the employment of persons with disabilities. The aim of this research is to identify the elements, which lead to successful transitions to employment for persons with disabilities. The Special Educational Needs Regulations 2 (1) (U.K) defines the transition programme as:

“A document which sets out the arrangements which an authority considers appropriate for a young person during the period when he or she is aged 14 to 19 years, including arrangements for special educational provision and for any other necessary provision, for suitable employment and accommodation and for leisure activities, and which will facilitate transition from childhood to adulthood.”

(Wood and Trickey, 1996, p.120)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (U.S.A. 1997, PL 105-17) states that when students with disabilities reach the age of fourteen, a programme of transition services, should be planned as part of the IEP since early planning is of utmost importance for it to be beneficial to students with disabilities.

In order to analyse the local situation with regards to early transition planning, the authors visited state and church schools at secondary level and also special schools. From the research carried out, it resulted that schools at secondary level are not preparing any type of transition programmes to employment for students with disabilities. In addition, the authors contacted other organizations who provide transition programmes for persons with disabilities, mainly Dar tal-Providenza, The Eden Foundation and the Employment Training Corporation, in order to analyse what transition programmes are being offered.

The right of Maltese citizens with disabilities to be provided with employment, is now regulated by means of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disabilities) Act of January 2000. According to section 7 (1) of this Act:

“No employer shall discriminate on the grounds of disability against a qualified person with a disability in regard to –

- (a) procedures relative to applications for employment;*
- (b) the hiring, promotion or dismissal of employees;*
- (c) employee compensation;*
- (d) job training; and*
- (e) any other terms, conditions and privileges related to employment”*

This research was inspired by the authors' personal experience of close relatives with disabilities, who are currently attending special schools, and will benefit in the near future from such transition programmes. Moreover, related subject units studied at the University provided additional interest in this matter, together with the beliefs of the authors that students with disabilities should have equal opportunities to be fully included in the workplace. This can be achieved by providing the necessary academic and vocational training opportunities to students with disabilities. As Cook et al. (1992) maintain,

“By recognising the human similarities in each of us and by positively valuing differences, parents and educators together can provide each child with the opportunity to develop his or her unique strengths...Parents, educators, and other community members must work together to create a nurturing environment sensitive to, but not solicitous of, children’s special needs.”

(Cook et al., 1992, p. 2)

In 1999, the National Commission Persons with Disability (NCPD) conducted a survey amongst persons with disabilities in the Maltese Islands. A questionnaire was used to gather the statistics required to analyse the needs of disabled persons and their families, to which there were 6,340 replies. Out of the respondents 3,574 (56.4%) were males, 2,762 (43.6%) were females, and the remaining four replies were not specified. A total of 542 people are still attending school, of which 225 (41.5%) attend special schools, 66 (12.2%) attend kindergarten school, 146 (26.9%) are at primary level, 92 (17.0%) at secondary level and 13 (2.4%) at tertiary level. From the survey conducted, it was found that a total of 3,145 persons are of a working age, of which 551 (17.5%) are employed, 120 (3.8%) are in a sheltered workshop, 1,082 (34.4%) are unemployed and 1,392 (44.3%) did not specify their work status. A detailed analysis of the above statistics can be found in Appendix A.

One can thus conclude from the results of this survey that, although the margin of error is quite high, since 44.3% of the replies did not specify their work status, it can be seen that the unemployment rate is quite high (61.7% of those who specified their working status), and thus this might indicate that not enough training opportunities are available. Nevertheless one must however note that 671 persons (38.3%) are engaged in some form of work, and this can be indicative of the increasing awareness of the capabilities of people with disabilities and effectiveness of present training programmes. When one considers that in 1999 there were 542 children with disabilities attending school, it is important that

suitable and effective training programmes are prepared in order to enable these students to find job opportunities later on in their life.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Throughout history, persons with disabilities have received many different types of insulting responses from others. Typical responses comprise horror, prejudice, fear of contamination, pity, dislike, revulsion, anxiety, bullying, hostility, and over protection. The Medical Model has strongly influenced the definitions of disability. The Medical Model of disability stresses that individual loss contributes to dependency, thus creating negative views of disability.

The Disability Movement, led by persons with disabilities has challenged the Medical perception of disability. This Social Model views disability from its social aspects, as Hahn (1986) clearly explains that disability arises when society fails to adjust to the needs of persons with disabilities, and not from the inability of the person with disability to adjust to the requirements of society.

2.2 DEFINITION OF EMPLOYMENT

Employment is a fundamental component in the life of people with and without disabilities. The type of job one holds, the amount of money one earns, and the advancement opportunities one is able to achieve, affect how one regards oneself, how one is regarded by society, and the amount of freedom one has financially and socially. Everyone aims at being employed in meaningful work that pays a fair wage. According to Brolin (1985),

“Employment is a critical avenue to other successful aspects of life such as health, friendship, self-esteem, and a feeling of purpose. Employment is often the key to improving an individual’s self-image to reducing feelings of loneliness, and to progression toward a richer quality of life.”

(Cited from Wehman et al., 1988, p.168)

2.3 DEFINITION OF TRANSITION

The United States Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has given a lot of importance to transition. Madeleine Will (1984), who is the assistant secretary to this office, defines transition as,

“An outcome-oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment ... a period that includes high school, the point of graduation, additional postsecondary education or adult services, and the initial years in employment.”

(Will, 1984, p.6).

The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) PL 101-476 describes the transition process as being,

“A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.”

(Individual with Disabilities Education Act, 1990)

IDEA states that transition-planning needs to start by the time that students are fourteen years old, or at a younger age where appropriate. By this time areas of study as well as other educational experiences which the young adults will follow whilst at school need to be identified and planned. At age sixteen, or younger according to individual needs, co-ordinated plans considering the post-school adult lives of the students, need to be designed and implemented. The plans should be based on what the young adults wish to achieve as adults. During this period, the students should be engaged in on the job experiences. It follows that by the time the adults are twenty-one years of age, they will be working.

People with disabilities need to gain the knowledge, skills and experiences needed to be successful in their adult roles. IDEA states that transition services are to invoke five types of co-ordinated activities:

- (a) *Instruction* includes the teaching of academic subjects and is generally provided within schools.

- (b) *Community experiences* refer to services, which take place outside the schools. These include community-based work-experiences, shopping, transportation and independent living centres. Schools, churches, social organisations, interest groups or other entities can provide the services.
- (c) *Employment and other post-school adult living objectives* are services which lead to jobs. They also include important activities carried out occasionally in adult lives as for example registering to vote and renting an apartment. These services can be provided either by schools or by other institutions.
- (d) *Daily living skills* refer to activities which adults do every day including grooming, preparation of meals, and paying bills. Training for such skills are provided by schools or other agencies.
- (e) *Functional vocational evaluation* refers to the process whereby information about job interests, aptitudes and skills is provided. This information can be gathered through observations, formal measures, and situational assessments and should be practical. Schools or other institutions can also provide the data.
- (f) *Related services* include services, which may be needed to help persons with disabilities to profit from special education. These services may include speech-language pathology and audiology services, physical and occupational therapy, as well as other services.

According to the Centre for Educational research and Innovation (CERI), the transition from school to work consists of three phases as follows:

- (a) the final years of schooling and the preparation for leaving school;
- (b) transition arrangements including vocational preparation and introduction to the working life;
- (c) independent living.

2.3.1 WILL'S CONCEPTUAL TRANSITION MODEL

Will (1984) has produced a conceptual transition model. This model highlights three major employment services, which are each regarded as important links from secondary schools to employment. These include:

Generic Services, which are available to people with disabilities and are mostly used by people with mild disability. These services include services offered by personnel agencies.

Time-limited services, which are specialised rehabilitation/adult services, that aid people with disabilities in finding employment. These services end when the persons with disabilities concerned find work.

Ongoing vocational services, also termed supported employment services, which are not found in each and every community. These aim at providing services for people with severe disability who cannot work without permanent follow-along assistance and support.

2.3.2 HALPERN'S COMMUNITY INTEGRATION TRANSITION MODEL

Halpern (1985) suggests that community adjustment, in addition to vocational training, needs to be given its due importance. Community adjustment embraces social and interpersonal skills, independent home living, and employment. The researcher is of the idea that social and interpersonal skills play a major role in the transition process. Halpern's transition model has broadened other professionals' ideas of transition. Hence, all the aspects of transition, not only those regarding employment, are given the importance according to Halpern's transition model.

2.3.3 WEHMAN, KREGEL AND BARCUS' VOCATIONAL TRANSITION MODEL

Wehman, Kregel and Barcus (1985) define vocational transition as follows:

“Vocational transition is a carefully planned process, which may be initiated either by school personnel or by adult service providers, to establish and implement a plan for either employment or additional vocational training of

a handicapped student who will graduate or leave school in three to five years; such a process must involve special educators, vocational educators, parents and/or the student, an adult service system representative and possibly an employer.”

(Wehman et al., 1985, p.3)

This definition implies that various professionals as well as different service providers are to participate in the transition planning process. The involvement of parents is found to be significant. The process needs to be planned and systematic, while the vocational service provided has to have a good quality.

2.4 IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR EFFECTIVE TRANSITION PROGRAMMES

When schools and agencies do not prepare students according to their needs, transition programmes are not planned carefully. Schools may focus their attention on academic skills only rather than on other skills, which could contribute towards independent living. Training providers should carefully plan an Individual Educational Programme (IEP-ITP) and an Individual Transition Programme (ITP) which encourage and promote the learning of vocational and independent living skills.

During this preparation, training providers are to meet with persons with disabilities and their families. Service providers must be aware of potential persons in the community, who can help persons with disabilities. Together, they can discuss face to face, the goals and the objectives of the IEP-ITP during organised meetings. When the school is in contact with other institutions such as the community, these together, can work so that persons with disabilities can achieve their independence.

According to Cook et al. (1992), the team members have to make sure that the following elements are recorded in the programme:

- (a) Information about the young person's present levels of educational performance;
- (b) The setting of short and long term objectives;
- (c) The recognition of any materials and services to be provided to the young person;
- (d) The extent to which the young person will partake in a typical education schedule;

- (e) The list of any services needed in order for the young person to learn within a regular programme;
- (f) The dates on which the services are planned to start and the length of time, which the services are expected to take up;
- (g) The suitable criteria on which the aims are built and the evaluation plans;
- (h) The schedules, which can be used to determine whether the short-term instructional objectives are being reached. A review of the planner should be carried out at least once a year.

2.4.1 THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME (IEP-ITP)

The IEP-ITP should include skills and other services to enable young adults with disability to become independent. The schools can begin teaching many of these skills all through their years in school. Work habits are applicable to many classroom activities. Employment skills which persons with disabilities need to learn are the following:

- (a) Arriving at work on time
- (b) Calling when sick
- (c) Punching a time-card
- (d) Finding appropriate materials needed
- (e) When to begin a task
- (f) Remaining on-task
- (g) Learning the route to the work-place
- (h) Knowing what to do or where to turn if problems are encountered. (Peer employees should support him in case of difficulties.)
- (i) Responding to corrective criticism without being angry
- (j) Pacing themselves during the day
- (k) Knowing what to do during the breaks
- (l) Caring of equipment and materials used
- (m) Socialising with fellow workers
- (n) When to terminate a task
- (o) Put materials away at the end of the day before leaving

It is important that job coaches supervise, help and guide the persons involved until they have learnt all the necessary skills. It would be much better if peer employees are trained to support the employees with disabilities in case of encountered problems. The presence of buddies (work mates) at work, would enable the employees with disabilities to avoid having to wait for coaches every time problems arise. Peer buddies are more familiar with the work system than job coaches. Such persons would also encourage persons with disabilities to build relationships with others.

There have been cases where youths with disability did not cope with their job because they found it difficult to maintain their daily routine working pattern. Williams (1991) claims that persons with disabilities can only succeed when they are given the necessary support by their job coaches, until they settle into a work pattern even when these persons are labelled as having challenging behaviour.

2.4.2 EARLY PLANNING

The earlier that transition planning begins, the better. This fact has led to the legal requirement under IDEA to stress that planning for the transition process should start as early as age fourteen. Early planning enables the people working on the IEP-ITP to become more familiar with the students' post-school objectives having to do with their desired job, independent living, and involvement within the community. These objectives are to be used as the basis for identifying the academic training needed as well as other useful experiences. Those youths that do not yet have a clear idea about what they would like to do as soon as they finish school, will in this way have ample time to explore different possibilities in their school and the community.

Early planning also allows students and their families to acquire information about the resources and supports available in the community both during and after the school years. Moreover, early planning permits the members of the IEP-ITP to identify people from adult services that should be invited to assist future meetings or to become members of the team. Most important is the fact that students with disabilities and their families require time to make informed choices about the near future.

2.4.3 EMPHASISING INDIVIDUAL ABILITIES

The IEP-ITP should be based on the students' strengths, dreams, and needs. Strengths compromise persons' skills, interests, personal qualities, and preferences. In this way planning is centred on what the students can do and not on what they cannot do. Dreams refer to what the students wish to accomplish after they finish school and include various areas of the students' future lives such as employment, health, independent living, relationships, leisure time use, and personal interests. Needs relate to the skills and opportunities that the students involved need in order to be part of the community. Needs include things, which the students would like to accomplish in order for their dreams to come true.

2.4.4 EMPLOYMENT-BASED LEARNING

Employment-based learning involves exploration of various types of jobs to assure an ultimate choice, assessment of skills, job shadowing, volunteer and paid work experiences at employers' work sites. Students having the opportunities to engage in real paid work are more likely to be employed as adults. Moreover, the more opportunity the students are given, the more successful they are likely to be in post-secondary employment.

2.4.5 SUSTAINED INVOLVEMENT OF EMPLOYERS

Employers are willing to invest time and resources in work place learning activities when they know that it will lead to direct benefit. Effective transition programmes create opportunities with employers who are here regarded as indispensable partners and valuable customers.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act (May 4, 1994) states that school-based learning is one of the elements where the young adults have the opportunity to explore their chosen career and to get instruction in academic and technical skills. Work-based learning, is another component, where focus is made on the involvement of workplaces as active learning environments. It is important that school-based and work-based activities are connected in order for them to become more relevant. Snell (1993) claims that:

“... it is very difficult to simulate the demands of a real work environment, such as interactions with co-workers and customers, productivity issues, and physical characteristics of the workplace, within the school setting.”

(Snell, 1993, p.566)

2.5 THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS IN THE COURSE OF TRANSITION PLANNING

Schools offer students with disabilities access to the same range of services and opportunities provided to all students, while promoting integration into the mainstream education system.

2.5.1 RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

Parents, counsellors, teachers, service-providers and young adults themselves should be equal partners in the development of the IEP-ITP and the transition process. The roles and responsibilities of each partner, for specific components of the school-to-work programme, should be clearly defined in the IEP-ITP.

It is important that students and families understand the aim of the meetings involving the members of the IEP-ITP and that they understand their legal rights and responsibilities.

2.5.2 THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS

Izzo and Shumate (1991) claim that that the involvement of parents is crucial in the transition process. They give many reasons for their statement, where they claim that:

- (a) Parents know the young adults better than anyone else, thus they can serve as critical resources in planning;
- (b) Parents can be extremely effective in maintaining continuity of training and of purpose;
- (c) Parents can act as system advocates, often facilitating changes professionals desire but are constrained to accomplish;
- (d) Parents can act as role models/teachers, instilling positive learning that makes job success for the young adults with disability more likely;

- (e) Parents can act as community supporters and messengers to the community about positive agency efforts;
- (f) Parents can act as service co-ordinators, thus ensuring more effective and positive results. They may even be called on to provide services such as transport;
- (g) Parents as nurturers/caretakers providing support and encouragement that complement professional efforts.

Studies carried out by Everson et al (1992) have prompted the researchers to conclude that teams which *“included parents as decision-makers and co-members were more effective in stimulating service delivery, change at the individual, local, regional, and state levels.”* (Everson et al., 1992, p. 48). Moreover, *“Lack of parent participation and involvement may be detrimental to the achievement of successful transition outcomes.”* (Johnson and Rusch, 1993, p6).

2.5.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ALL PARTNERS.

Making sure that all the members in the IEP-ITP team, keep in continual contact with each other gives parents, counsellors, service providers, teachers, and students the ability to understand how their responsibilities fit with other aspects of the programme. This system helps to promote understanding, engagement, and support from all partners.

2.5.4 TRANSITION SPECIALISTS

Career guidance and counselling helps youths to identify the career options open to them within different industries and occupations and the education needed to succeed in these occupations.

The Salamanca Statement (1994) stresses the role of vocational counselling and training for persons with disabilities.

“Young people with disabilities should be helped in transition from school to adult work life ... this calls for appropriate training technologies, including direct experience in real life situation outside school ... Transitional programmes should be carried out with the active involvement of vocational

guidance counsellors, placement officer, trade unions, local authorities and the different services and agencies concerned.”

(Salamanca Statement , 1994 Section 56, p.34)

As there is an increase in the number of people with disabilities who enter the work place, so will businessmen be required to adapt their work places to meet the needs of these youth. Moreover, teachers will have to teach advance skills to students with disabilities. Parents must also be taught how to help the youths to take advantage of the wider range of options.

2.5.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDENTS' SELF-ADVOCACY

Students must be actively involved in the decision-making during the IEP-ITP. This helps to guide them through the process of weighing options when making difficult and important decisions, building their self-esteem, and developing the ability of living and working independently. Parsons (1990) states that training courses for persons with disabilities should help in boosting their self-esteem. This will act as counteraction against the negative experiences which may have damaged the persons' self-esteem.

2.5.6 THE SETTING OF LONG-TERM OUTCOMES.

The transition planning in IEP-ITP requires that all the members involved in the planning consider how the services available today will apply to the work force demands of the future.

2.4.7 THE SETTING OF HIGH STANDARDS/EXPECTATIONS

Low standards prevent students with disabilities from reaching their fullest potential. Programmes regarding vocational training should offer the same opportunities and choices to youth with disabilities that are available to all other youth, ranging from manufacturing industries to high technologies.

Corbett and Barton (1992) state that *“job choices are often restricted”* for person with disabilities. Smith (1996) agrees that job choices for persons with disabilities are limited and that the opportunities to choose among different types of employment are restrained. She gives a number of reasons to promote her argument. Smith states that people with disabilities may associate employment with financial and psychological risks. Thus the benefits of being in employment are outweighed by this negative view. Moreover, people with disabilities are often assessed in terms of their disabilities rather than their abilities and so they are seen as being incapable to be in a working environment. Smith concludes that most of the employment experiences for persons with disabilities have been so negative that failure has become to be associated with employment. Through research by Bishop et al.(1991), it was found that:

“At least in the early years of their working lives, that the majority of young people were in a limited range of manual jobs in which they felt frustrated and from which they did not think they could or should attempt to move”
(Bishop et al., 1991, p.139)

Freshwater and Leyden (1989) have carried out research where they found that the unemployment rate for young people with disabilities is higher than that for people without disability. The researchers also discovered that people with disabilities have fewer possibilities to experience vocational training. In similar research which McGinty and Fish (1992) carried out, it was found that people with disabilities have limited access to the skills and opportunities, which they need for employment.

2.5.8 SOCIAL AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Vocational training programmes should ensure to help students with disabilities to develop communication skills, which will in turn allow them to be actively involved in all aspects of community life. Wehman et al. (1988) claim that the,

“... type of employment, amount of money earned, and advancement opportunities directly affect how we look at ourselves, how society evaluates us, and the amount of freedom we have financially and socially...”
(Wehman et al., 1988, p. 67)

2.6 VOCATIONAL OPTIONS

Ideally every community should offer a number of adult services and vocational options for persons with disabilities. Wehman et al. (1988) mention eight types of employment alternatives. Information about each of the work options is given in the following paragraphs.

2.6.1 ADULT DEVELOPMENTAL CENTRES (ACTIVITY CENTRES, DAY CENTRES)

Many people with disabilities attend these centres as soon as they finish school. Persons frequenting the centres are enabled to learn daily living activities, academic subjects as well as skills related particular jobs. These centres may also have sheltered workshops, where employees work in a protected environment and with other people with disabilities. Day centres do not encourage the transition of persons with disabilities into employment. Segregation occurs, where people with disabilities are isolated from the community.

2.6.2 SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

Sheltered workshops provide people with disabilities with contract bench employment in a safeguarded environment. In sheltered workshops, the participants are only people with disabilities. It is presumed that persons with disabilities are not yet prepared for actual employment and that they are in need of more instruction before being able to work within the community. One can observe that, *“These programmes have come to be viewed as ‘dead end’ facilities with little client movement into competitive employment” (Buckley and Bellamy, 1985, p. 174)*

2.6.3 JOB PLACEMENT TO COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT

Students with disabilities leaving secondary schools are able to enter competitive employment, especially if vocational rehabilitation counsellors sustain them. This approach to employment comprises the use of time-limited services. Here time limit is at the basis of the support provided, where services end as soon as the persons involved fit successfully into employment.

Wehman at al. (1988) claim that the process of vocational rehabilitation should include four major stages, mainly evaluation services, pre-placement services, placement services and post-employment services. In the evaluation service process individuals' capacities and weaknesses, as well as possible job placement options are identified. Pre-placement services enable persons to develop their employment potential to the full, through the use of vocational training and work adjustment services. Placement services aid individuals in procuring a job, which enables them to develop their full vocational potential. The aim behind post-employment services is to help individuals maintain their job and to sustain individuals in prospective career promotion.

2.6.4 TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

In this kind of service, the job placement is followed by weeks or months of intensive job-site training. Instruction on work adaptation and social skills occurs while the persons are already engaged in employment. As soon as the persons involved are stable on the job, the support ends. As Wehman at al. (1988) suggest, *“Transitional employment is an effective extension of time-limited job placement, since it allows for a more intensive approach to correcting any problems that the clients may have.”* (Wehman at al., 1988, p. 178).

2.6.5 SUPPORTED COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT

Supported employment is a service provided for people with severe disability, who cannot hold a job without ongoing support. Supported employment is also characterised by support which continues all the while which the employees are in employment. This support is reassuring to the parents and the employers of the persons with disabilities

concerned. This kind of work offers daily social interactions with people without disability.

The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 defines supported employment as,

“... competitive work in integrated settings – (a) for individuals for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred ... services available (but not limited to) provision of skilled job trainers, on-the-job training, systematic training, job development, follow-up services...”

(Cited by Wehman et al., 1988, p. 180)

2.6.6 MOBILE WORK CREWS

Mobile work crews consist of up to six individuals with severe disability who perform service jobs in the community. The employees are paid by a sponsoring agency based on productivity. A manager who attends the employees on a full-time basis, is accountable for the preparation of mobile work crew, and gives on going supervision in order to preserve productivity.

2.6.7 ENCLAVES

These consist of a group of up to eight persons with disabilities that work in a business among persons without disability. The employees are supervised on a long-term basis. Due to the long-term assistance on the job, the production is increased and job termination is prevented.

2.6.8 SMALL BUSINESSES

Bellamy, Horner and Inman (1979) have triumphantly used this model of employment with persons with severe disability. A group of individuals with disabilities (up to ten persons) work with an equal number of people without disability in a business setting, where all the employees are involved on the same tasks.

2.7 EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

Smith and Povall (1994) identify three main employment barriers, which are encountered by persons with disabilities. Physical barriers include lack of accessibility into buildings and lack of appropriate resources. Procedural barriers are indirectly experienced without the knowledge of the persons with disabilities concerned. These may include procedures that employers may use to recruit, assess, and promote. Discrimination often takes place where criteria, which are inapplicable to the job, are executed. Attitudinal barriers are experienced directly. Prejudice, ignorance and fear lie at the heart of segregation.

2.8 CONCLUSION

The aim behind the literature review was to try to identify the common aspects, which define and constitute the transition of persons with disabilities to employment.

From the literature, which was consulted, certain important issues emerged. It is essential that the transition process starts early in the life of persons with disabilities. The authors agree that planning should start when the individuals are fourteen years of age. This enables for sound preparation, incorporating the desires that students wish for their future adult life. Basic work habits can be taught throughout primary school years or at home.

In the process of planning for transition, various members should be consulted including parents, counsellors, teachers, service-providers and the students themselves. These should work in collaboration with each other and towards the advancement of the student to the world of employment. During the transition process the abilities of the students involved must be stressed. Consequently the objectives of the IEP-ITP should reflect these abilities.

When designing the transition planner, it is important to include on-job training as one of the main targets. This is beneficial since people with disabilities will gain the necessary skills in the work environment, will experience the job routine, and will be engaged in social interaction with fellow employees.

Conclusively, as Fish (1992) argues, successful transition to adult life should result *“in a satisfactory life style and a sense of personal value in the family, neighbourhood and the community. The same opportunities for independence, access and choice should be available to all.”*

Chapter Three

Methodology

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation studies the transition process of persons with disabilities towards employment. The aim of this research is to study:

- (a) what kind of planning, with regards to the transition process of students with disabilities, exists at schools at secondary level and in special schools;
- (b) what kind of planning, with regards to the transition process of persons with disabilities, is being offered by service provider agencies, which are geared towards vocational training and securing employment;
- (c) the planning which is taking place before/during the transition process;
- (d) how the services provided are reaching the goals of the transition planning;

During the course of data collection, both primary and secondary sources of information were used. Secondary sources involved the collection of information, which other researchers have produced and which is already existent. This data was found in books, Internet sites, journals as well as newspapers. Primary sources included information gathered through interviews, focus-group discussions and case studies.

During the research process, it was noticed that other agencies rather than the schools are engaging persons with disabilities in vocational preparation. These agencies were thus contacted in order to evaluate what programmes are being offered to persons with disabilities.

3.2 CARRYING OUT THE RESEARCH

The research was carried out during the months of September 2000 to March 2001. A letter was sent to the agencies that the authors wished to interview. Most of them sent their replies and were eager to participate in the study. Others had to be contacted by telephone, when replies to the letter were not received. The agencies, which were contacted, are Dar tal-Providenza, The Eden Foundation, Razzett tal-Hbiberija, the Ability Development

Centre at the Employment and Training Corporation. Since three of these agencies, Dar tal-Providenza, The Eden Foundation and the Employment and Training Corporation are directly involved in these transition programmes, these were visited on various occasions, in order to interview the various people involved in these programmes.

Various persons in state and church schools at secondary level and special schools were interviewed. In all, sixteen schools were interviewed, of which eight were state secondary schools, four were church secondary schools and four special schools. With regards to the secondary schools, there was equal distribution between boys and girls schools. The names of the schools involved are not mentioned in order to retain anonymity.

3.3 SAMPLING

Random Sampling was used in order to determine which schools at secondary level would be interviewed. Schools were classified as state Junior Lyceums for boys; state Junior Lyceums for girls; state Secondary schools for boys; state Secondary schools for girls; Church schools at secondary level for boys; Church schools at secondary level for girls; and special schools.

Each school was assigned a number. The numbers for the different schools categories were put in different groups. Thus for instance all the numbers for each State Secondary Girls School were grouped together, while the numbers for all Secondary Boys Schools at secondary level were combined to form another group, and so forth. Two numbers were picked out at random from each group.

3.4 INTERVIEWS

Interviews can be divided into two types: structured and unstructured. When using structured interviews, the researcher has a pre-determined set of questions to be asked and the interviewer rarely deviates from the allocated set of questions. On the other hand, the unstructured interview takes the form of a discussion between the interviewer and the interviewee, with questions discussed being open-ended.

The interviews, which were carried out, fall in between these two extremes and were conducted through the use of informal conversations and semi-structured interviews. Spradley (1979) states that casual, friendly conversations is one of the methods to gather research data.

During the preparation of the interview questions, probes and follow-up questions were planned. This was carried out in order to verify the correctness and accuracy of the replies given by the interviewees. According to Bailey (1982) one of the most important functions of probe questions is to *“structure the respondent’s answer and make sure that all topics of interest to the interviewer are covered and the amount of irrelevant information reduced”*. (Bailey 1982 p.45)

These questions were used as guidelines during the interview and resultant discussion. Extensive notes were also jotted down, which were further elaborated in more detail after the interviews. Refer to Appendices C to K for a detailed copy of the interviews.

Life histories, which are a particular type of case study, were also used. In this case extended unstructured interviews were carried out with five persons with disabilities. During these interviews, the persons with disabilities as well as their job coaches, parents or carers, were present. The names of the persons involved in the life histories have been changed in order to retain anonymity. The case studies can be found in Appendix B.

3.4.1 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF INTERVIEWS

One of the advantages of interviews is flexibility, where probes and repetition of questions may be asked for specific answers when the interviewees may have misunderstood the question. Moreover, non-verbal behaviour can also be observed and thus one can further assess the validity of the answers. Spontaneous answers can be recorded as well. The use of interviews elicits higher response rates than for instance a questionnaire since illiterate persons can still answer the questions. Interviews also make it possible for all questions to be answered.

On the other hand interviews are very time-consuming and have to be arranged according to the hours during which the respondent is available. Thus, the interviewer can finish only a relative small number of interviews each day even though the actual interview may be relatively brief. There may also be cases where the interviewees' answers are misunderstood. Likewise, as Bailey (1982) observes "*the respondent's answers can be affected by his or her reaction to the interviewer's sex, race, social class, age, dress and physical appearance or accent.*" (Bailey, 1982 p.67)

The interview can be looked upon as a threat to the respondent especially when the information it is seeking to elicit is sensitive. Reactions against this threatening factor may take the form of denial to respond or reliance on the interviewer to protect their anonymity and not present information in ways that can identify the respondent.

Chapter Four

Results And Discussion

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 PREPARATION WITH REGARDS TO WORK

In all, sixteen schools were interviewed, of which eight were state secondary schools, four were church secondary schools and four special schools. Others interviews were carried out with Dar tal-Providenza, The Eden Foundation and the Employment and Training Corporation. The results of these interviews can be found in Appendices B to K.

It was not possible to interview all the persons in schools at secondary level, which were chosen for the sample. When the authors contacted the head teachers, it was found that mainstream state schools G and H do not have students with disabilities attending the schools. When the facilitator in church school O was contacted, she claimed that her participation in the research would not be of value. The reason, which the facilitator gave for her refusal, was that the student she caters for is only given reinforcement in academic subjects. The head teacher in school P claimed that there are no facilitators to cater for students with disabilities in the school, and that thus students with disabilities do not receive assistance or have an individualised programme.

The interviews carried out in mainstream state schools show that the facilitators or guidance teachers in schools are preparing students with disabilities for life within the schools. The interviewees explain that students with disabilities are equipped with social skills, which they can use while they are at school, but which they can also apply in their future life. The facilitators work a lot on the skills that the students need in their socialising with others.

The facilitator in school I, argues that what the students with disabilities need is social inclusion since, academically, they have a totally different programme. Moreover, the facilitator claims that the students she is responsible for are still 11 years old. She thinks that it is too early to start preparing the student and transition programme from school to employment. A guidance teacher in school J shares the idea that students with disabilities are still too young to start any transition programme. The guidance teacher states that the students with disabilities are still in their third year at school (i.e. 13 years old), and that as a

result, transition cannot actually happen until the students arrive in their fifth form (i.e.16 years old). The authors think that their view of preparation for employment does not include the basic work habits which were discussed in Chapter 2.

The guidance teacher in school I argues that the guidance teachers do not yet feel adequately prepared for the inclusion of students with disabilities. The argument is based on the fact that the teachers, as well as the students who attend school I, are not truly prepared about the subject in question. The guidance teacher claims that it is only on the first day of school that the staff comes to know that a student with disability will actually start attending their classes. No contact whatsoever takes place between the facilitator, guidance teachers and general teachers and the parents before the actual start of school. The only contact which takes place is between the facilitators and the students with disabilities, in order for them to get to know each other. This happens after the start of school, outside of school hours, and at the facilitators' own initiative, although the inclusion programme calls for placement to be made the preceding year so the facilitator can work with the student during the summer. The guidance teacher in school J also criticised the situation that exists in school system whereby the facilitators only come to know about the students that they will be working with on the first day of school. Schools I and J hold that it would be much better if knowledge about new students with disabilities entering the school, comes about before the start of school. This does happen at primary level with Heads who understand the importance of preparation

The authors believe that the system whereby school staff do not come to know students with disabilities before the actual start of school proves to be a disadvantage to the parties involved. Students with disabilities ought to be aided in any transition taking place in their life. Transition from primary school to secondary school is as important a step as is their transition from secondary school to employment.

The authors of the research suggest that the students with disabilities and their families know which school the students would be attending so that the summer holidays prior to the start of school, would be used in order for them to get to know the facilitators better. The facilitators would be better equipped to aid their students, if this happened. It is also true that *“the manner in which support is provided ... must be given careful thought, so that high expectations for performance are maintained.”* (Downing, 1996. p. 150)

It follows that if the school staff are prepared about the arrival of students with disabilities, they can in turn, prepare the peers for the new comers. Peers are very important for the students with disabilities' inclusion and progress in the school, as they can be tutors, helpers, buddies as well as friends. As Stainback and Stainback (1990) state,

“Having peers who will be a buddy or friend(s) in a new, unfamiliar classroom to provide encouragement, support and/or assistance, when needed, is critical to the success of inclusive schooling.”

(Stainback and Stainback, 1990 p.39)

In School F, on the other hand, it is made sure that integration of students with disabilities happens as soon as they enter school. The PSE teacher takes the students on a tour of the school, so that they would not feel lost.

School E makes it a point that at the start of a scholastic year, a letter from the guidance teachers, is sent to the teachers who will have a student with a disability in their class. In the letter, the guidance teachers give a brief description about the student and recommend what teachers can do in order for the disabled student to follow the lessons as smoothly as his peers do.

School E in particular, works with the students as soon as they enter school. The guidance teachers in this school, help students in building their self-esteem. They encourage them to become self-advocates, which in itself is one of the tools needed for independence. When students with disabilities are faced with a problem and need to talk about it, it is they and not their parents, who must contact the guidance teachers. This skill can become an asset to the students' future life, where the students would have the necessary skills to solve problems that occur on the job and in the community.

The guidance teacher in school J feels that the facilitators do not prepare their students for employment. Students with disabilities in this school are learning the same skills as their peers who are not disabled, are learning. A separate programme, which caters for students with disabilities, does not exist at this school.

It is not appropriate that the guidance teachers should assume the role of facilitators. They have not been trained to cater for the learning of students with disabilities. Although the

guidance teachers' action in providing literature about the disability means well, the authors feel that the literature given cannot provide a true reflection of the students. This approach depersonalises the student and focus on the disability rather than the individuals' abilities.

Each student is different and has unique qualities, abilities and limitations, which only a person such as a facilitator who knows him/her well can understand. This is the main reason why the planning of the IEP-ITP is beneficial to the student with a disability. Plans must focus on the needs of specific persons, rather than on the general needs of the classroom or the categories of disability. The National School-to-Work Learning and Information Centre in Washington (1996) claims that:

“When school-to-work programmes are organised according to the interests and aptitudes of each individual student, rather than by disability or categorical label, students tend to achieve better employment outcomes.”

(Resource Bulletin: February 1996, p.1)

Actual preparation for employment happens within schools K and school L. Both schools include computer training for the students with disabilities. Computers are regarded as an asset for employment.

In special schools only one transition co-ordinator is responsible for all of the transition programmes for the students with disabilities leaving at year's end. The steps taken during the transition programme are as follows:

- (a) An assessment of the student's life skills is carried out once they start the programme. The various life skills that each the student possesses are identified.
- (b) The student's care worker is identified.
- (c) The person with a disability is assessed again, this time on self-feeding, communication skills, likes and dislikes and on other services that they use.
- (d) All the information gathered is put in a profile that is given to the care workers.
- (e) Case conferences are held where the teachers meet with the students, their parents, the care workers, and other persons who are invited by the parents, to attend the meetings.
- (f) The care workers visit the student at school, where they see the student at work.
- (g) The students start to attend the Adult Training Centre once a week until they can attend the Centre on daily basis.

The majority of students with disabilities coming from special schools make their transition to the Adult Training Centre. (Appendix L:Fig: 4.1). However, when students are assessed and identified as being 'able', they may be referred to The Eden Foundation.

In special schools A, B, C and D a kind of transition programme, as described above, is being carried out. The young adults start this programme between the ages of eighteen and nineteen. The teachers in special schools A, B, C and D, train their students in mastering life skills, social skills, communication skills, and other practical skills which they would need in order to lead a more independent life. In special schools, the students are learning to read signs found in public places. Examples include reading the signs *ladies* and *gents* on a toilet door, using the calculator, reading the clock, using a phone card, and handling money. The students are being trained in doing tasks such as sequencing (doing a task after finishing another) and making crafts such as woodwork, filigree, needle work, cooking, pottery and others.

Teachers in school A are trying to identify which skills are most helpful for the students' independence, e.g., such as washing the plates, making the bed and the like. Such skills can also be used in sheltered workshops. School A says that it is focusing on the learning on academic skills, especially in instances of more able students. The academic skills are learnt in context. For example, number recognition is learnt through money handling, shopping, and other situations.

The classes in school D are equipped with bathrooms and cloakrooms. The students are taught a variety of self-care skills such as bathing, washing their teeth, and other skills for daily personal care.

From the research, which was carried out, the authors observe that there is only one transition co-ordinator managing the transition programmes in special schools. Whilst the work which the transition co-ordinator does is to be admired, there still is a question to be answered. How can one transition co-ordinator manage to cater for the transition programmes of all the students with disabilities in all the special schools?

Formal transition programmes do not take place in church schools although the teachers teach social and academic skills to students with disabilities. Facilitators in church schools

M and N identify the students' academic abilities and work on these strengths. The church schools, which were interviewed, are also socially integrating students with disabilities.

Two students with disabilities attend school N, where one of these students does not have a facilitator. Although the parents know that the student will not have a facilitator, due to lack of financial resources, they insist that the student attend the school. When teachers compare the achievement between the two students, they observe that the student who does not have a facilitator does very poorly in the academic subjects and that his peers do not accept him. School M also recounts that a student with a physical disability, who attends school, does not have a facilitator. The student does not do well at school. In this instance the facilitator is not present because the parents do not acknowledge that their son needs assistance.

The authors find that schools whereby facilitators are not employed, are eliminating the fundamental right of students with disabilities access to learning which fulfils their abilities and needs. Through the preparation of the IEP-ITPs, facilitators can address the students' individual learning styles.

“Facilitators should be typically trained to meet the unique educational needs of students with severe sensory and multiple disorders. Their support will be directed toward assessing the compatibility of fit between individual goals and the curriculum and adapting instruction and materials accordingly to best meet learning needs within the typical activities of the class.”

(Downing, 1996, p. 150)

The Eden Foundation, a non-profit organisation has an adult programme called Transition Programme, whose aim is to facilitate the transition from the school to employment, identifying in the process each person with disability's strengths, abilities and preferences. The students, who attend the Transition Programme at The Eden Foundation, start their transition programme when they reach their fourteenth year. At that time, apart from their IEP-ITPs, the students also have a transition programme planned for them.

In relation to preparation for employment, the Transition Programme is divided into two programmes, where two distinct groups of students with disabilities are involved. The first programme involves students with disabilities whose age ranges from sixteen to eighteen. The programme entails a transition programme from school to work. The Transition

Programme makes it possible for the students to learn such academic skills as number recognition, clock reading, and basic addition. These are learned within contexts, in terms of practical life situations. The acquisition of various life skills is also included in the programme. The students learn about personal care, domestic skills and social behaviour within an apartment in the community that is provided by The Eden Foundation. Students with disabilities are engaged in the learning of social and communication skills, which are crucial tools for an independent life.

The other programme at The Eden Foundation, is a follow-up of the first programme and includes young adults who are from eighteen years of age onwards. The programme continues until the persons with disabilities are employed. A follow up service is provided to persons with disabilities, who are engaged in employment. Persons with disabilities attending this programme, gain independent life skills, which they can use in the daily life within the community or in the workplace. The teacher's role begins to fade out and the young adults are gradually exposed to employment. Persons with disabilities start to visit work sites by the time they are seventeen. These visits are very important, since they show which kind of employment might the trainees most likely wish to be engaged in. Apart from work site visits, the trainees also have direct work experience twice or three times a week.

The Transition Programme at The Eden Foundation is continued until persons with disabilities become employed. Once clients are engaged in employment, a job coach trains them for the job. The job coach fades out gradually, but has follow on contact with the employees with disabilities once a month, or more frequently, according to each person's abilities and needs.

4.1.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING FOR TRANSITION

In Chapter 2, it was highlighted that according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, planning for transition should start when the students are fourteen years of age. The authors of the research agree that the best practice for transition entails that preparation starts by the time that the students with disabilities are fourteen years old. Starting to plan for transition, at this time, allows the students themselves to have ample time in which they can adapt themselves to the prospects that are intended to be achieved

after they finish school. Planning early allows for a wide range of jobs to be experienced by the students. Students with disabilities will automatically have a greater opportunity to decide which kind of employment they feel most inclined to. Moreover according to Downing (1996), the decision as to which kind of employment they prefer to be engaged in after leaving school will be the result of informed choices.

Starting to plan early for transition, means that the transition team members have the required time to examine whether progress has been achieved by the students. In instances where students have made progress, the transition team members have time where they can plan activities to reinforce learning. In opposite instances of students' regress, there is time in which the transition co-ordinators can plan for different activities to allow learning to take place.

4.2 THE PLANNING OF INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES (IEP-ITPs)

Schools E and F, which were visited and which have students with disabilities, claim that they do not have facilitators to prepare the IEP-ITPs. In schools I, J, K and L, the IEP-ITPs start to be composed as soon as the students with disabilities enter the school. However, the aspects of the students' lives, which are taken into consideration during the preparation of the IEP-ITPs, vary from one school to another.

In school I, only academic aspects are included in the IEP-ITPs. The facilitator in school L, acknowledges that the student she works with, does not need special attention either with regards to the academic aspects or with the social aspects of her life. What the facilitator actually does is help the student for revision purposes, especially in comprehension exercises and in physical exercises prescribed by the doctor. In this case the IEP-ITP, also include vocational aspects where the student attends computer training sessions.

The facilitator in school K, tries to include all the aspects of the student's development in the IEP-ITP. Physical skills, social skills, emotional skills, creative skills as well as independent living skills are thus included in the preparation of the IEP-ITP. The facilitator also attempts to include other skills, which are involved with employment. The

facilitator explains that such a skill, as having the student phone school to report illness, might be used by the same student in her future as an employee.

In special schools, teachers prepare a kind of IEP-ITP. The IEP-ITP begins to be prepared and implemented as soon as the students start attending the special school. The preparation of the IEP-ITP depends on individual abilities and needs, which students possess. It is for this reason that students in special schools A, B, C and D each have a different IEP-ITP, planned for them, where skills are taught whenever the teachers think that the students are ready to learn. The headmaster in school C, describes the IEP-ITP as a student-oriented programme, based on the students' individual needs, where the goals are planned according to the students' abilities. The headmaster in school D describes the IEP-ITP as an ongoing process through which the students can learn very basic skills.

The facilitators in church schools prepare a kind of IEP-ITP for students with disabilities, where academic and social skills are taken into consideration. The facilitator in school N, does not prepare the IEP-ITP, since the student he caters for, attends one of The Eden Foundation's programme. In fact, the facilitator in school N states that he works together with the parents and with The Eden Foundation so that the goals set by the team are reinforced at school.

The Transition Programmes of The Eden Foundation try to include every aspect of life for the persons with disabilities. Academic skills, speech therapy, physiotherapy, social behaviour skills and employment skills may be included in the IEP-ITP, depending very much on individuals' skills and aptitudes.

At Dar tal-Providenza, IEP-ITPs are carried out for each of the individuals. This is done, in order for the ability promoters to identify the skills that the person already possesses, and to plan for other skills to be developed. Goals, which the persons with disabilities need to achieve, are set. The instruction of skills takes place gradually. Assessments are carried out, where ability promoters identify whether the persons with disabilities have acquired the skills.

As outlined in Chapter 2, the Individual Education Programme (IEP-ITP) is a plan, which helps the teacher in developing a framework for students with disabilities. Before planning

for the IEP-ITP actually starts, facilitators should carry out an assessment review of the students' current strengths and abilities. The programme is to be built upon this assessment. The IEP-ITP contains descriptions of the students' needs and documentation on which the needs are based. The IEP-ITP should include a set of targets, or long-term goals and short-term objectives that meet the mentioned needs. An explanation of the method applied, in order for the targets to be fulfilled, needs to be prepared. A summary of review and evaluation procedures to be used for each objective of outcomes of reviews, is to be enclosed in the IEP-ITP. Target dates for objectives, which cover academic, physical, social, emotional, and independent living skills, should be set. For an IEP-ITP to be effective, the persons responsible for each objective's accomplishment, including persons at home and school, therapy, and community settings are to be established.

Whilst the authors were analysing the results, it was found that the real definition of the IEP-ITP is sometimes misinterpreted and that facilitators in the schools are not preparing the IEP-ITP properly. The reason behind the authors' concern, is that the IEP-ITPs, which the facilitators prepare include only the goals which the facilitator sets. The evaluations, which record the student's progress, are omitted from the planning. It was observed that when asked about the preparation of IEP-ITP, the interviewees did not mention records of progress. This demonstrates that although facilitators are carrying out the IEP-ITP, they are not doing it properly.

The IEP-ITP should include various goals, which the students need to achieve both for present use and future use. The majority of the facilitators, who were interviewed for the research, state that the IEP-ITP for students with disabilities includes only academic aspects. One can observe how other skills such as the social, vocational, and independent skills are being left out from the IEP-ITP. Vocational aspects are not taken into account because students are considered to be still young to be prepared for the world of work. Vocational skills are generally misunderstood to be job specific rather than taken as referring to work habits. Although IEP-ITPs are more widely spread in special schools, the students will not become fully independent, as long as they will not be taken out for experiences within the community.

The authors find it difficult to understand how there is a number of persons with disabilities who need to start learning practical skills, do so only after they leave school.

Shirley's case study shows how she mastered skills such as using a zebra crossing, or traffic lights, handling money and catching a bus, only when she started to attend a programme at The Eden Foundation, when she was already twenty-five years old! Wehman et al. (1988) claim, that in schools,

“There is an extensive reliance on curriculum guides that all too often do not reflect the competencies necessary for vocational independence. Not infrequently, Individualised Educational Programme objectives only reflect content that the teacher feels comfortable with, or that has been dictated by a state Department of Education curriculum, rather than objectives that are crucial for eventual placement into nonsheltered employment.”

(Wehman et al., 1988. p.15)

4.2.1 THE MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN THE IEP-ITP

A similar pattern, with regards to the people participating in the IEP-ITPs, can be observed throughout the mainstream state schools I, J, K and L. In all of these schools, the facilitators are the persons responsible for the planning, development and execution of the IEP-ITPs. The facilitator in school K remarks that the parents trust her so much that they leave the preparation of the IEP-ITP in her hands, since they know that whatever she plans is in the student's best interest.

At this stage, it is not to be forgotten that the IEP-ITPs are not prepared in every school. When problems emerge in schools J E and F, the guidance teachers are contacted. In the case of important decisions, such as the choice of subjects, the guidance teachers, the peripatetic teachers, the head teacher, the parents and the students themselves take part in the decision-making process.

In special schools A, B, C and D, the facilitators or kindergarten assistants help the teachers in the preparation of the IEP-ITP. Other members may include professionals who may be working with the students. Professionals include speech therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and others. A teacher in school D remarks that if the students are carrying out a programme in a private employment and service agency, the teachers ask for the agency's programme in order for her to work on the same skills as the agency.

The facilitator in the church schools M, is responsible for the preparation and implementation of the IEP-ITP. The facilitators responsible for the IEP-ITP for the students attending schools M and N, make sure that the peripatetic teachers and the head teachers are contacted. This is done in order to enable all the interested parties to give their input. The facilitator of student, in school N, who attends The Eden Foundation programme, is invited to discuss progress and set objectives for the IEP-ITP with the other team members

The members participating in the planning and reviewing of the IEP-ITP at The Eden Foundation may vary. However in most instances, a psychologist, a physiotherapist, a speech therapist, an occupational therapist, the parents and the friends of the person with disability are the members of the IEP-ITP. A formal review, involving such persons as the ones mentioned above, is held every six months. During the review, the progress or regress of the persons with disabilities is discussed. Each of the members sets goals for the IEP-ITP for the following six months. A summary of the IEP-ITP is also given to the parents.

Team collaboration during the planning and implementation of the IEP-ITP is considered to be one of the elements, which can make the programme successful. The authors are of the opinion that team collaboration is important as long as each of the members does not impose on others about what is to be done. Each member of the IEP-ITP team must participate fully in the setting of goals and in the evaluation of the students' progress. Stainback & Stainback (1989) state that :

“It should be noted here that “collaboration” means that the support facilitator, teacher, students, and other school personnel work together cooperatively with no one assuming an expert, supervisory, or evaluator role.”

(Stainback & Stainback, 1989, p.31)

4.2.2 THE STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE IEP-ITP

From the information, which was gathered, one can observe that of the state mainstream state schools, which were interviewed, only the facilitators in schools K and L encourage students' involvement in the IEP-ITP. Whilst the facilitator in schools L allows the student's say in the social aspects of the IEP-ITP, the facilitator in school K encourages the student's say in the academic aspects of the programme. It is interesting to note that both of the facilitators in schools K and L discuss the vocational aspects of the IEP-ITP with the students. In both cases, the students are seen to be keen about computer training.

The facilitator in a school I, claims that the students she works with are still too young to be able to have a say in the IEP-ITP.

The special schools, which were visited for the research, try to consider the students' desires. In instances, where the students show inclinations to particular subjects or skills, the teachers give them the necessary support. Special schools B and C allow the students to sound their voice with regards to the IEP-ITP. The head teachers in schools A and C, state that the students' involvement in the IEP-ITP depends on the students' abilities. On the other hand the head teacher in school D confirms that students are rarely able to express their wishes. The church schools M and N confirm that the students' wishes are taken into consideration during planning of the IEP-ITP.

The objectives and aims of The Eden Foundation's IEP-ITP reflect what the persons with disabilities need to learn. Learning is carried out in ways, which are found to be enjoyable and motivating for the trainees. The people with disabilities are encouraged to be involved in the decision making process, where aspects, which they wish to include in the IEP-ITP are discussed.

The authors agree that the students and their friends as advocates, should be involved in the IEP-ITP and that their participation is to be active. Lovitt et al (1994) claim that there may be students who are not interested in their IEP-ITPs and who may have negative attitudes towards programmes. This scarcity of interest results from lack of the students' involvement in the IEP-ITPs.

The authors think that students, who are not given the opportunity to be active members of the IEP-ITP team, lack a sense of ownership, which is detrimental to the students' self-esteem and confidence building. The authors believe persons with disabilities are not taught to be able to express themselves. It is 'thus the teachers' and facilitators' task to teach students how to indicate their preferences. The teaching can be done through the use of various types of media including as photographs, pictures, and other sources, where the students can express their opinion, even in such basis such as the choice of food.

4.2.3 THE PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE IEP-ITP

All the mainstream state schools, which were contacted, organise parents' meetings at the start of each scholastic year. Thus the parents of all the students in the school are called to come together to these meetings. It is a common occurrence that should the need be felt, parents may ask for individual meetings with the guidance teachers.

Contacts between the parents and the facilitators in schools I, J, K and L are more frequent, more regular and take place on a one-to-one basis. Good relationships exist between the parents and the facilitators. A daily contact book is kept, where communication between both parties is constantly kept. The facilitator, in school L, asserts that the parents of the student she works with, have a say in the IEP-ITP. Decisions are taken jointly with the parents. The facilitator also advises the parents about ways in which the student can be helped. The facilitator explains specific teaching methods to the parents, so that the continuation at home would not mix the student up.

The contacts with parents who have young adults attending special schools happen daily, through the use of a daily contact book. The parents can also phone or go to the schools in order to discuss any problems or queries, which they might have. Parents are also kept informed about any progress or regress, which the young adults may show. Schools A and D organise educational meetings for the parents. During these meetings speakers such as nutritionists, dentists, and others may be invited to give talks, and the parents can visit the classrooms and speak with the teachers.

In special schools A, B, C and D, meetings with the parents are held at the commencement of each year. Individual meetings with the parents also take place. Teachers explain their

programme to the parents and ask them whether they wish to teach particular skills to their young adults. While in special school B, C and D the IEP-ITPs are reviewed once a year, the special school A reviews the IEP-ITPs twice during the scholastic year. During the review sessions, the teacher and the other professionals discuss the IEP-ITPs of the students, together with parents. Parents are advised to reinforce the targets of the IEP-ITPs, at home. The head teacher in school B considers that parents may act as obstacles because they might not want the young adults to work. According to the head teacher in the same school, many parents are afraid that the young adults with disability will lose their social welfare benefits once they find employment.

Parents who have students with disabilities attending church schools are seen as partners with whom facilitators and other professionals can discuss the IEP-ITPs. Church schools M and N contact parents and inform them about the achievement of the students with disabilities. During IEP-ITP meetings, parents are invited to join the discussions about the programme, while their decisions are taken into account.

As described in Chapter 2, the IEP-ITP should include the involvement of the parents. The parents can be important contributors in the planning of the IEP-ITP, as they are persons who know the young adults better than anyone else. Moreover, the parents can help the students at home by reinforcing the skills and attitudes, which are trying to be achieved through the IEP-ITP.

The parents of the clients making use of The Eden Foundation's services are consulted before the IEP-ITP are planned. They are also encouraged to say which aims they would like to include in the IEP-ITPs, for the students to achieve. It is very important that the skills, which the students with disabilities work on at the Transition Programmes, are reinforced at home. This is one of the reasons why regular and frequent contact with the parents, who use The Eden Foundation's services, is kept. Formal meetings are held every six months.

Before persons with disabilities start attending the training course at the Employment Training Corporation (ETC), parents are contacted and a meeting is organised for them. Moreover, regular contacts are kept with those parents whose young adults are receiving training. The ETC organises sessions where the parents meet with persons at the ETC to

discuss the progress of their young adults during the course. During these sessions the parents are asked to say whether they have remarked any progress for the young adults.

Ability promoters at Dar tal-Providenza, can face either one of two categories of parents. There are parents, who are not in the least interested about the lives which the persons with disabilities lead. These parents are very difficult to deal with, since some of them may even object to the adult child's entry into employment. There are other kinds of parents who visit their children frequently and ask about the progress which their adult children may be making.

The interviews, which were carried out in secondary schools show that parents are passive contributors of the IEP-ITP. There is a great difference between planning together with the parents and informing the parents about the students. The authors think that in order for the parents to be involved in the IEP-ITP, they also need to set home goals in the programme, together with the other members. Parents are not on the same level as the other members of the IEP-ITP team and so the inclusion of the parents in the programme is not taking place. Moreover, parents should be more aware that their children with disabilities have many positive qualities.

The authors believe that team members should regard parents as the primary care-givers and they play an important role in their adult children's life. Barnes (1997)

“Families are likely to play a bigger part in enabling their learning-disabled members to achieve a level of autonomy which can enable them to participate within society than is the case with non-disabled-children.”

(Barnes, 1997, p. 84)

4.3 CONTACTS WITH THE WORLD OF WORK

All of the mainstream state schools and church schools M and N, which were interviewed, make it possible for the fifth formers to go on visits to different work sites. These visits involve all the students, not solely students with disabilities.

Special schools A, B, C and D, enable the students with disabilities to visit different work sites such as shops, factories, and Local Councils' offices. These visits aid students in

learning about appropriate behaviour in different situations. During a visit to a factory, the students attending school C, were given the opportunity to work on the machines. School B tries to provide the students with opportunities to experience work. The school sets up bazaars where the students sell crafts, which they themselves would have created. The students with disabilities keep the money they earn for themselves.

The IEP-ITP of The Eden Foundation, include contacts with the world of work. Moreover, when they are sixteen years of age, people with disabilities start registering for work, with the ETC.

It does not often happen that employers contact The Eden Foundation in order to recruit persons with disabilities. What does happen is that a job developer from The Eden Foundation searches for jobs. Employers are contacted by telephone, since a phone call is regarded to produce more effective results than a sent letter does. When an employer is found to be willing to discuss the employment of persons with disabilities, the matchmaking phase takes place. The persons with disabilities, who have the necessary abilities to be the most suitable for the job are found.

A meeting with someone at the top of the management, within a work place is then held. During this first meeting, the job developer provides the employer with information about the system of transition employed by The Eden Foundation to facilitate the persons with disabilities' passage to employment. When the first meeting is successful, a second meeting is arranged where the job developer is taken on a visit around the work place. During this tour, the machinery and the type of work in general are checked to see whether they match the abilities and needs of the person with a disability who the job developer has in mind. A third meeting is then held where adjustments with regards to machinery and work steps in relation to the person with disability are discussed diplomatically.

The persons with disabilities concerned are then invited to visit the work site and are encouraged to provide feedback about it. The majority of the persons with disabilities give positive feedback. At this stage, transport options are taken into consideration. Moreover, the job developer also organises a meeting with the employees and the supervisors who will be working with the persons with disabilities. The fact that The Eden Foundation provides a follow-up system with its clients, is very attractive to employers. The Eden

Foundation has carried out a transitional programme for about sixty persons to employment since 1993. (Refer to Chart 4.4 in Appendix F)

A variety of employers are contacted by the ETC but unfortunately very few of them accept to recruit persons with disabilities. A department at ETC is responsible for these contacts, where employers can also give their requests. The ETC finds that employment opportunities for persons with disabilities are rare, since, most employers do not accept persons with disabilities for what they are.

Ability promoters at Dar tal-Providenza also contact employers through mail but in most cases these have proved to be fruitless. Whenever personal meetings with employers are organised, there are more positive replies. Sometimes meetings are also organised where employers get to know what employing a person with disability entails. During these meetings, employers can become more aware that persons with disabilities still have abilities and are able to perform several tasks.

From the interviews that were conducted, it was found that the contacts with places of work which schools try to make during the transitions programmes are few and infrequent. Unfortunately, there is only one person who co-ordinates the transition programme for all the special schools and so it is impossible for her to do all the contacts. It is the authors' opinion that there need to be more persons who are willing to work as job developers. The job developers would be responsible for finding appropriate jobs and carry out transition programmes for the students with disabilities. This research indicates that it is more effective when contact with various companies is carried out personally.

4.4 VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Young adults, who participate in the Transition Programme of The Eden Foundation, engage in on-the-job training. A crucial element in the Transition Programme of The Eden Foundation is the Work Animation process. The Work Animation makes it possible for people with disabilities to be trained on work sites. The training lasts three months. Every three months, the work site, where the persons with disabilities work, is changed. As a result, persons with disabilities will get an idea of the different kinds of work in which one

can be employed. Persons with disabilities will also have the opportunity to see various work options and to choose the one they like best.

During the training period, groups of three persons with disabilities and an instructor from The Eden Foundation go to work two or three times during the week on a full day basis. Persons with disabilities are not paid a full wage, but are given donations by the employers. Employers are also encouraged to recruit some of the persons with disabilities at the end of their training. The Work Animation process enables people with disabilities to experience what it is like to be at work. It also makes it possible for persons with disabilities to learn every day work routines such as waking up early to leave for work, punching in / out, sequence of work, logistics of finding the toilets and going to the canteen during the breaks. During the Work Animation, the wishes of the persons with disabilities, their abilities, their skills, their behaviour as well as their manual dexterity are all taken into consideration.

The training sessions continue until the persons with disabilities, are engaged in full / part-time employment. When a full / part-time job is found for persons with disabilities, job coaches from The Eden Foundation go to work on the job for a week. This is done so that the job coaches will learn the procedure of the job before actually starting to train the persons with disabilities for the job. The job coaches assist the persons with disabilities at work for three months and then gradually fade out their supervision. However, the follow-up support does not end. The job coaches stay available to the employees with disabilities and to the employers. The coaches make periodic visits where the employees' input on the work place is discussed. The frequency at which follow-up contacts are carried out varies according to the needs and abilities of individual persons, but usually occur three times a month.

Vocational Training at the ETC takes place prior to work placement where, during this training, persons with disabilities are prepared for the world of work. The Getting Through Programme at the ETC is a course designed mainly for persons who have cognitive disability. The programme lasts for sixteen weeks, although it can be extended to four more weeks on an individual basis. Persons with disabilities attend this course on a daily basis (i.e. five days a week), where two days each week are dedicated to work experience. During this course, the ETC also provides transport where a pick up point is established.

The programme focuses mainly on three areas important to potential employment: a) social/life skills, b) applied literacy, c) on the job training.

Twice a week, students attending the ETC's programme learn about life skills, including the writing of the Curriculum Vitae, skills in personal hygiene, and social behaviour. Another day is dedicated to applied literacy where students learn basic skills such as writing one's name, using an ATM, using a calculator, reading signs, reading the clock, using and managing money, and filling out of such forms for passports, identity cards and other simple operations.

On the job training is seen as the most essential element of the Getting Through Programme, where persons with disabilities get in contact with the world of work. Persons with disabilities visit work sites twice a week. Different work sites are visited including restaurants, hotels, factories, and also the Ability Development Centre offices at the ETC. At the work place, persons with disabilities can learn about appropriate behaviour at different work sites. During the job training programme, persons with disabilities are taught various skills such as obeying the rules, being punctual, using a punch card, and others. These are all necessary skills, which enable for the persons to survive in the world of work.

Job coaching is another service, which is offered by the ETC to its clients. Whenever a job is found, the ETC identifies the persons with disabilities' needs. It is on these criteria that the ETC decides whether trainees with disabilities need a job coach, and for how long the assistance will take place. The job coach service ends as soon as persons with disabilities show that they can manage alone at work.

The ability promoters at Dar tal-Providenza are aware that initial experiences at work for persons with disabilities are crucial. It is for this reason that an effective and meaningful transition process is needed. The process of work orientation, for residents living at Dar tal-Providenza, starts as soon as employers confirm that jobs are available. Ability promoters identify the persons with disabilities that they think are most suitable for the job. If the persons with disabilities show interest in the job opportunity, the ability promoters go to the work site and observe what kind of work the persons with disabilities will be engaged in. In order for the transition to run smoothly, the ability promoters involve the

peer workers in the process. Dar tal-Providenza has moved twenty persons to employment over the last few years.

When the trainees with disabilities start their initial experience at work they are assisted by ability promoters who act as a job coaches. During this time, the ability promoters teach the work process to the trainees. Trainees learn other skills such as what to do during break times and the location of the toilets. The ability promoters will stay with the trainees until it is observed that they can manage by themselves.

Work experience in the community is one of the elements that the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 promotes most during the transition process. On-the-job-training is seen as crucial to a successful transition programme. Unfortunately, the results show that students are not gaining work experiences while they are still at school. It thus follows that without work experience, when students with disabilities leave school, they will find it difficult to find a job. An important aspect of work is that when persons with disabilities are engaged in job experiences, they share their lives with people without disability. Persons without disability will no longer be fearful or likely to conceive negative assumptions about persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities have different abilities and needs. The strengths and aptitudes of persons with disabilities are various and as emphasised in Chapter 2, it is the abilities of the student that should be the focus when planning an IEP-ITP rather than the disability. Persons with cognitive disability have to learn skills in their natural context, as they are not able to associate tasks carried out in one situation and adapt the same task to a different situation.

4.5 THE EMPLOYERS' VIEW

The interviews, which were conducted at work sites, show that employers are satisfied with the output, which the employees with disabilities are giving. The employers state that they do not employ persons with disabilities out of charity. Employers X, Y and Z think that persons with disabilities should have the same opportunities as persons without disabilities.

The importance that employment plays in persons' lives has been discussed in Chapter 2. Persons with disabilities face many problems when they show interest in entering the world of employment. Koller and Holliday (1998) claim that:

*“... as individuals make the transition into employment from other settings,
... numerous additional barriers may prevent occupational success.”*
(Koller & Holliday, 1998, p. 296.)

Bynoe, Oliver and Barnes (1991) hold that in addition to the 'social bias' and the 'differential impact of neutral standards' which are hindering access for persons with disabilities in the work place, there are other obstacles. The obstacles mainly are that sometimes employers are not willing to carry out some changes in environment. Moreover, employers think that persons with disabilities lack skills and are 'incapable' of participating on the work site.

The interviews with employers, which were carried out for the research, show that employers acknowledge that problems have been encountered in the course of the employment of persons with disabilities. The difficulties, which were faced, did not threaten the persons with disabilities' positions at work. The employers, who were interviewed, believe in the potential of employees with disabilities and thus do not give up when challenged with problems.

The scheme whereby the ETC pays fifty percent of the minimum wage during the training of employees with disabilities, is very interesting to the employers who were interviewed. The employers also agree that the service of the job coach and the follow up support provided by the service agencies, as great incentives. Employer Z also considers the service of a peer support at work to be not only of aid to the employee with a disability, but also to the work itself.

The authors think that the interviews carried out with the employers, prove to be remarkable models for other employers who may be doubtful at the idea of employing persons with disabilities. In order to enhance the employment rate of persons with disabilities it would be helpful if potential employers could hold meetings with employers who already have persons with disabilities working with them. In these meetings,

employers like the ones who were interviewed for the research, can talk about the experience of employing persons with disabilities.

Another way of encouraging employers to employ persons with disabilities is to encourage them to attend to professional training programmes. The employers would, in this way, be better able to understand the aim behind the services offered by job coaches and also to observe the importance of having buddies on work sites. The service, whereby the follow up support is provided, can be better appreciated during their observations of actual training programmes.

Transition co-ordinators in schools or in service agencies, can arrange for students with disabilities to do voluntary work in the community as part of their training programme. Wehman et al. (1988) suggest that

“Women’s clubs...would be glad to have students serve at a luncheon where members would otherwise do it themselves. Other persons would welcome the practice of janitorial or grounds maintenance on their property by students seeking practical experience.”

(Wehman et al., 1988, p.21)

4.5.1 WORK AS ENHANCEMENT TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES’ LIVES

Mark’s case study clearly outlines the difference between his behaviour before and his manner after an individual programme was implemented. At the time of Mark’s arrival at Dar tal-Providenza, he did not receive any behaviour support programme. He was treated as a person who could not do anything by himself. In time the trainers at Dar tal-Providenza started to get Mark to be responsible for self-care activities, like making his bed, washing and dressing himself, and other activities. Mark’s behaviour changed for the better and his job coach continues to record improvement since the start of Mark’s involvement in voluntary gardening work.

The study investigating Luke’s transition to employment, highlights the difference between Luke at the time he worked at home and at the time he started to work in a mobile work crew. When Luke engaged in doing factory work at home, he earned a lot of money but did not enjoy a social life. Things changed as soon as Luke started to work within an

employer co-operative. Employment made it possible for the young man to move away from the shelter of home towards an active life within the community.

4.5.2 THE JOB COACHING SYSTEM

The trainees with disabilities' training is left in the hands of job coaches. The job coach system encourages employees X, Y and Z to recruit persons with disabilities. The employers comment that they like the follow up system of support given by the job coaches. When problems arise the employers know that they can contact the job coaches. A good example of the work a job coach (or ability promoter) should carry out, can be observed in the case study involving Christian's transition to employment. After initial meetings with the employer, Christian's job coach visited the work place when he/she spent two weeks as a worker. This was done so that the Christian could later be taught the skills related to the job. The job coach was at Christian's side during all the working hours, for the first weeks. Fading out happened gradually, where the job coach was absent from the work site for more and more hours each day until their supervision was no longer needed. Although the fading out process occurred, the job coach still makes use of follow-up contact with the employer and with Christian.

4.5.3 PEER WORKERS

The involvement of peer workers during the transition process is an aspect that is common for all the work sites involved for the research. The employers state that before employing persons with disabilities, the peer workers were informed. A meeting involving all the employees was held in order for the employers to see that all the assemblage agree with the decision. Employers X, Y, and Z claim that the job coaches who assist the trainees with disabilities organised meetings for the peer workers. They gave peer employees information and answer any questions they might have about the new employee. This action helped the co-workers with reducing their fears and with omitting negative assumptions that they might have.

4.5.4 THE BUDDY SYSTEM

Employers X, Y and Z explain how in all the work sites buddies are there to help the persons with disabilities. The employers are satisfied with the buddy system. This is so, since persons with disabilities know that they have someone close to refer whenever problems arise. The interviews show that buddies act out of their own initiative. Moreover, it can be noticed that the buddies do not only help the persons with disabilities to integrate with peer workers during the working hours, but the buddies aid the employees in building social lives during leisure time. Buddies can become personal friends rather than just colleagues at work.

The authors are of the opinion that moments like the one described in Christian's case study, where Christian needed the job coach to be trained in how to behave at work, can well be taken care of without the need of having to call the job coach. It is not just that the work mates should not joke at work. The authors suggest that employees who work with persons with disabilities be trained to act as buddies. The process of a task at work can be explained while inappropriate behaviour can be corrected there and then, without waiting for the job coach to arrive on the spot.

During the interview with employer Z, the authors were introduced to the person with disability who works there, and to his buddy. For this paper, the person with disability will be called Brian while the Buddy will be called Daniel. Daniel is a young man the same age as the Brian, that is, he is twenty-four years old. Out of his own initiative, Daniel made friends with Brian and introduced him to other employees. The other employees are less familiar with Brian's unique communicative style. Daniel, thus, acts as Brian's interpreter. Daniel guides Brian in the process of work, reminds him about the days when he is to be over-time, and also encourages him to go out after work hours. Daniel admits that it is very difficult to have Brian going out after work and during the weekends with him. This is because Brian's parents are very protective towards their son.

One can observe how buddies can act not only as a necessary resource at work, but they can also make it possible for persons with disabilities to be engaged in a life outside the work site. From the research that was carried out, the authors found that it is very rare to

encounter persons like Daniel who out of their own initiative start to act as buddies. In fact, Brian is the only person with disability in the research who has a buddy at work.

4.5.5 STUDENTS PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The information which was gathered, shows that participation in extra-curricular activities is greatly encouraged by the guidance teachers as well as by the facilitators in all the mainstream state schools, church schools, and special schools. All the students with disabilities are encouraged to take part in such activities as sports days, prize days, plays, carnival activities, as well as other such types of entertainment, that are organised by the schools. Schools acknowledge that activities such as the ones mentioned above are very important for the students' social lives. Students with disabilities attending school D, have won various medals in the Special Olympics that were organised in the year 2000. School B organises recreational activities where students with disabilities interact with students without disability.

The Transition Programme at The Eden Foundation aims not only at moving persons with disabilities to employment, but also at integrating them within the community. In fact once the transition co-ordinators at The Eden Foundation come to know young adults with disability more deeply, they transition them within a community organisation of their liking.

As was highlighted in Chapter 2, support from the community can help the persons with disabilities in various ways. Fritz, Wolfensberger, and Knowlton (1971) state that when persons with disabilities interact and participate in leisure activities with others, they can master various activities that can help them to lead a more 'normal' life.

The authors feel that the schools or the facilitators who assist students with disabilities should include participation in the community within the IFP ITP. Specific organisations situated in the student's home community could be contacted. The facilitators can accompany the student during the first encounters and they can help the students in establishing social relationships. Participation in the activities of the community can facilitate the transition leisure time use after leaving school since skills, procedures and personal relationships will have already been established. It follows that through these

interactions persons with disabilities grow socially and the community learns to be more accepting of individual differences. Salembier and Furney (1998) claim that

“Students who are connected to a community network are more likely to have experiences and opportunities available to them, to obtain employment ... and to know both paid and unpaid people who will continue to support them in achieving their long-range goals once they have left high school.”

(Salembier and Furney, 1998, p.133)

Planning for life within the community should be an essential part of the IEP-ITP if the students are to become independent. Shopping trips, transportation skills, phoning from a telephone booth, and ordering in a coffee shop are all examples of skills that can be mastered by persons with disabilities. The authors are of the opinion that participation in activities in the community help students with disabilities becoming full members of the community.

Two of the persons with disabilities participating in the case studies (refer to Appendix B) for the research, live independently in a house within the community. The authors can observe the difference between the life which Annie and Shirley lived within Dar tal-Providenza, and their life within the community. Whilst still living at Dar tal-Providenza, the women who have a cognitive disability shared a flat with twenty-eight other persons with disabilities. Annie and Shirley could not go out when they felt like it and they were always being catered for. Being in open employment and living in a house within the community has changed the women’s lives. The two women with disabilities, can now lead an independent life. They live with four other persons with disabilities. They go for shopping, cook, manage the house chores, go for walks, and are involved in many different activities that are common to community life.

The authors believe that integration within the community enables persons with disabilities to become independent, to appreciate their self-worth, and to become aware of their abilities. Successful lives like the ones Annie and Shirley lead prove that persons with disabilities can make it in employment and most importantly, can become integrated members of the community. As Wehman et al. state, *“more factual information is needed by the public at large about good training programmes, proven success stories, and handicapped persons in general.”* (Wehman et al.,1988, p.21).

Chapter Five

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters, the transition programmes of various schools at secondary level and other agencies were discussed. Taking into consideration the research findings about successful transitions to employment that persons with disabilities achieved, the authors will at this point attempt to propose the essential elements that proved to lead to this attainment.

5.2 EARLY INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

The authors are of the opinion that early inclusive programmes for children with disabilities prove to be advantageous for the pupils' future lives as members of the community. Bricker (1978) proposes three different arguments in favour of the inclusion of pupils with disabilities in the mainstream school. The first argument, known as the social-ethical argument, attempts to dissuade people from forming a negative opinion about children with disabilities. The second argument, that is the legal-legislative and ethical argument, has emerged from legislative acts and Human Rights Issues, that require that pupils with disabilities be educated in inclusive settings. The third argument, involving what Bricker calls the psychological-educational argument, reflects on the children's primary need to interact with progressively more demanding surroundings. As quoted by Cook et al. (1992), this argument suggests that *“learning through imitation occurs when suitable models are available and activities are arranged to elicit imitative behaviour.”* Moreover, *“an integrated programme is thought to be more characteristic of such an environment.”*

5.3 THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

The facilitator is a most beneficial resource in the inclusive programs. This person will have been especially trained to implement IEP-ITP for pupils and students with disabilities

in order for specific and personal needs to be met. However, as in Downing (1996), *“The special educator or teaching assistant should be perceived as additional support for the teacher and class, providing one-to-one assistance only when absolutely needed”* (Ferguson et al., 1992).

Downing (1996) also suggests that, *“Support does not mean having low expectations or doing for the student. Ideally, the right amount of support allows the student to make maximal learning gains while participating in typical and valued activities.”*

5.4 THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME (IEP-ITP)

The IEP-ITP should be developed by a team of persons to include the person with disability, his / her parents as well as other professionals and persons who may be working with the student. The parents may also wish to appoint other people as team members for the implementation of the programme, including friends or outside school professionals and agencies.

5.5 PLANNING FOR TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT

The Individual Transition Plan, also known as the ITP, should start when the student with disability is fourteen years old. The ITP is to be planned as a part of the IEP-ITP. Time will be required in order for students to adjust to the additional prospects outside educational institutions. Students will also need to be granted the opportunity to make decisions about their future life in order for them to be able to retain as much control as possible over the quality of their life.

The authors believe that whilst attending school at secondary level, students with disabilities need to experience training at various job sites so that informed choices about future employment can be made. As Downing (1996) claims, *“The transition plan ... must allow for hands-on experiences to which the student can respond.”*

5.5.1 STUDENTS' BUILDING SELF-ADVOCACY THROUGH ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

It is the authors' opinion that students with disabilities are encouraged to be active participants in their transition planning. The exercise of and experience in making decisions while still attending school will be of use in the students' future. This is so since they will have had experience in considering alternatives before taking decisions and in acquiring the ability to work independently. The students will in this way build the way towards their self-esteem.

Self-advocacy, as a skill, can be included in the planning of IEP-ITP, even whilst children with disabilities are still at a young age. As indicated by Cook et al. (1992), class teachers and facilitators can create *“opportunities for young children to explore, to make decisions, to ask questions, and to exercise appropriate self-restraint.”*

5.5.2 PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAMME

Parents' involvement should be regarded as crucial, during and after the transition programme. as they are/ being the primary caregivers for their children. Active participation of the parents is possible when they are fully included in this inclusive transition plan. The level on which parents should be involved can be summarised by the following points:

- (a) Parents should keep daily contacts with the team members who are working with the students.
- (b) Parents should participate actively during the meetings held by providing any information about the students' behaviour at home.
- (c) Parents should be given the opportunity to express their wishes and aspirations for the child. Moreover, parents should recommend any home goals, skills, or experiences which they would like the students to acquire at school and at home.
- (d) Parents should be prepared to collaborate and comply with implementations and development made in the transition programmes that are made by the team members or other professionals who are seeking to work in the best interest of their children.

5.5.3 TEAM COLLABORATION

Successful transition programmes happen when all the team members who are planning the transition programmes collaborate and reach an accord together. The various members who can form part of this team would mainly consist of the teacher, the facilitator, medical professionals, the parents, or as is other family members, the students, friends, and any other persons who are working closely with the child. It is of utmost importance that whenever the child is following a programme at an agency, that the school makes it a point to involve the persons who are working with the student in transition, or vice-versa (i.e. the agency will involve the school). These members might include the job coach, the care worker, and any other professionals dealing with self-independent skills. The team members should keep contact with each other and should meet formally at least once a year in order to discuss and evaluate any progress made by the child. During these meetings, team members have to set short term and long term goals to achieve the desired skills and experiences.

5.6 INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS

An independent life is something, to which all persons with disabilities aspire to. In order to lead an independent life, it is important that the students acquire the necessary training in daily living skills. Such skills are to be met through the IEP-ITP and include personal care and hygiene, clothing care, household chores, food preparation, money management, shopping, transportation and mobility access, leisure management, and vocational skills.

5.7 INTEGRATION IN THE COMMUNITY

Inclusion in the community is an experience, which enhances the communication skills of the student while helping the student in establishing relationships with others. This experience also leads the student to full inclusion in the community. Therefore, integration in the community should be planned in the transition programme and the team members should make this experience possible by encouraging the student in participating actively in these activities.

5.8 PEER PROGRAMMES

Peer programmes are essential to the transition programme because they allow full inclusion. These programmes can be planned in the classroom, in the community, and on the work place. Peer programmes are critical in the student's life as they can help the students integrate with others while enhancing the students' confidence and self-esteem. Moreover, these programmes will foster a mentality that celebrates differences where fear and prejudices about persons with disabilities would be mitigated. Peer Friendship Programmes, Peer Tutors, Peer Support Networks, and Peers as Physical Assistants (for persons with physical disability) should be developed.

5.9 ON-THE-JOB EXPERIENCES

On-the-job training entails the mastering of vocational skills and of experiences that one would encounter in a work environment. Thus, this preparation should start as soon as the transition programme is planned and it should take place while the student is at school. Ideally, these on sites experiences should be organized during normal school hours and should be held once or twice weekly.

5.10 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the research that was carried out the authors find that people with disabilities such as the ones who assisted to transition programmes by Dar tal-Providenza are prominent example of successful transition, since they have been integrated into the community.

Nevertheless the authors suggest that successful transition to work and into the community would be easier to achieve if the elements mentioned above were to be included in the transition process.

It would be advisable that in the future, similar research should be carried out in order to analyse the developments in the transition programmes and determine whether any progress has been achieved in this area.

Appendices

Appendix A

Extract From The National Disability Survey 1999 (Published By The National Commission Persons With Disability)

Table 1.1 Distribution of persons in the survey by age and gender.

Age (years)	Males	Females	Total	%
15 to 19	209	135	344	5.43
20 to 24	163	110	273	4.31
25 to 29	157	88	245	3.86
30 to 34	238	141	379	5.98
35 to 39	241	135	376	5.93
40 to 44	239	168	407	6.42
45 to 49	244	167	411	6.48
50 to 54	223	130	353	5.57
55 to 59	200	145	345	5.44

Table 1.2 The employment of the persons in the survey

Employment	Persons	%
Unemployed	1082	34.4
Employed	551	17.5
Sheltered workshop	120	3.8
Unspecified	1392	44.3

Table 1.3 The distribution of the employers of disabled persons.

Employed with	Persons	%
Government	335	60.8
Private Sector	146	26.5
Self-employed	52	9.4
Parastatal Sector	18	3.3

Table 1.4 The distribution of persons in the different school levels.

School level	Age (Years)					
	Under 17			17 - 30		
	No.	% (a)	% (b)	No.	% (a)	% (b)
Special school	144	64.0	33.5	81	36.0	72.3
Kindergarten	66	100.0	15.3	0	0.0	0.0
Primary school	146	100.0	34.0	0	0.0	0.0
Secondary school	73	79.3	17.0	19	20.7	17.0
Tertiary level	1	7.7	0.2	12	92.3	10.7

Appendix B

Case Studies

Guideline Questions

1. Can you give us some information about your childhood?
 - How was your life at home / school?
 - Which school did you attend?
 - What did you do after you finished school?

2. How did you come into contact with the world of work?
 - Did you follow any type of program?
 - What did you learn from the program?
 - Who was responsible for your learning?

3. Were you given the possibility to do any kind of work training?
 - What kind of work training did you do?
 - How long did the training last?
 - Was the training carried on the work site?
 - How long did the training last?
 - Were you supervised / aided during the training?
 - Who assisted you?
 - How many work training opportunities did you engage in?
 - Did the work training opportunities help you in choosing your current job?

4. What kind of job are you engaged in now?
 - How did you find out about the job?
 - Were you trained for the job?
 - Were you trained on the job site?
 - Who trained you for the job?
 - How long did the training last?
 - How long have you been on the job?

5. Describe your typical day at work.
 - At what time do you start working?
 - What do you do during break times?
 - At what time do you finish working?
 - How many days during the week do you work?
 - What kind of transport arrangements do you make use of to arrive to and depart from work?
 - What do you do when you arrive home from work?

6. How would you describe your relationships with people at your work site?
 - What kind of relationship do you have with fellow employees?
 - Do you have a fellow worker who you can refer to in case of problems at work?
 - How is your relationship with this fellow worker?
 - Are you happy at work?

7. Do you have any hobbies?
 - What hobbies do you engage in?
 - Are you involved in activities / organisations within the community?
 - What activities / organisations are you engaged in?

CASE STUDY 1

Name: Mark (name has been changed for ethical reasons)

Age: 29

Persons present in the interview: Mark and his ability promoter.

At home Mark was a very troublesome child. He could not be controlled and he was very aggressive towards members of his family and towards the neighbours. However he was very orderly, clean and independent. His parents were very anxious about his behaviour and they finally decided to refer him to Dar tal-Providenza.

Mark used to go to the workshop at Mtarfa. Reports from there showed that his behaviour was a problem since he beat others continuously. Moreover, while travelling on the van, he would beat up his friends and the driver whilst the latter would be driving. Because of his behaviour, the people responsible at the workshop at Mtarfa, as well as the driver were angry and they reported the case to the administration of Dar tal-Providenza.

The staff at Dar tal-Providenza was worried about his aggressive behaviour. But the person responsible for Mark's training insisted that if they persisted in their work, Mark's behaviour would eventually change. Mark's trainer showed him when he was wrong in his actions. She also showed him love and affection.

Since he did not want to go to the workshop any more, he did not want to climb into cars. Once, the trainer tried to take him out for a ride in her car. But as soon as they arrived at Hamrun, he started to beat her because he thought that she was taking him to the workshop. The trainer told him that they were only going for a ride and she changed direction. From that instant, Mark started to show trust in the trainer, since he could see that she had not tricked him.

The trainer was persistent in her teaching and it took ten years before Mark started to show improvement with regards to his behaviour. Mark began to accept the trainer and himself better. In the mean time, the trainer took him on outings to Valletta, where he showed positive behaviour.

The staff at Dar tal-Providenza began to involve him in the daily work. He would be engaged in making the beds, changing the pillowcases and doing other chores. A person from Dar tal-Providenza taught Mark how to wash and dress himself. He learned how to get the toilet bag,

from his locker and afterwards to put it back in its place. Once he is trained in carrying out an activity, he does not forget the procedure.

The trainer observed that Mark liked to play with the ball and to chase others during games. She also noticed that he loved watering the plants.

An ability promoter from Dar tal-Providenza started to engage Mark in diverse work experiences. This was done in order for the ability promoter to observe which kind of work, Mark liked to engage in most. It was observed that he was attracted towards gardening. The ability promoter worked with Mark at gardening. The process took about one year. Mark showed that he was very keen to do gardening work, even in hot weather. He did not talk but through his use of body language he showed his ability promoter when he had enough. He was also engaged in work at the workshop of the Dar tal-Providenza at the same time. But it was noticed that he was more inclined towards gardening.

Through contacts with a social worker, his ability promoter arranged for Mark to start working at San Anton garden on a voluntary basis. His ability promoter is still coaching him, since he cannot engage himself in certain aspects of the work. He needs guidance in order to know what to do next. But once he is taught how to carry out a task he is able to remember it. He knows how to use scissors, to bring the spade and the bucket and to feed vitamins to the plants.

Before Mark started to work at San Anton, his ability promoter informed the employees about him. She taught Mark the social skills and the orientation process skills on the work site. Mark gets on well with fellow workers. He has oriented himself on the job. He knows where the toilets are and how to switch the lights on.

The ability promoter knows it when he needs to go to the toilet, even if he does not say so. But other people do not understand Mark's body language. She will thus be engaged in working on a system where Mark will show appropriate flashcards to say what his basic needs are (e.g. he will show different flashcards to show that he wants to drink, to go to the toilet or to engage in any other need).

The ability promoter has been working with him for the past four years, during which, Mark has made much progress.

CASE STUDY 2

Name: Christian (the name has been changed for ethical purposes)

Age: 27

Persons present in the interview: Christian and his ability promoter.

Christian attended mainstream school up till secondary level. At sixteen, after he had finished school, he started to go to the Adult Training Centre. At the same time, he was living at Dar tal-Providenza. However, due to lack of availability of work on the market, he still visited the Centre, where he did not gain any skills with regards to employment.

In the year of 1998, Christian started to work at the workshop of Dar tal-Providenza, where a trainer initiated him to work. At the workshop, Christian worked on the repair of wheelchairs.

A job finder from Dar tal-Providenza found work for Christian at a supermarket. However, the employer was willing to pay Christian only pocket money.

Then, about a year ago, an ability promoter from Dar tal-Providenza knew a baker through personal contacts. She asked this baker whether he would be interested in employing a person with a disability. The baker agreed to the idea, and he personally came round to Dar tal-Providenza to speak with Christian and to explain what kind of work he would be doing.

Christian was very excited about the idea of working outside the parameters of Dar tal-Providenza buildings. It was the first time for him to be outside Dar tal-Providenza. An ability promoter was assigned by Dar tal-Providenza to involve Christian in on-the-job training.

The ability promoter first visited and worked at the bakery by himself for a fortnight. This was done, in order for him to understand the steps needed to complete the work so that he would be better equipped to teach the same work steps to Christian.

Christian then started work training at the bakery, having the ability promoter by his side all the time of the working hours, for two weeks. His ability promoter then saw that Christian was coping very well at work. The ability promoter thus started the fading out process, where instead of being with Christian all the time, he would be away from the spot, for a few hours a day. He then proceeded to go to work with Christian only for a few times during the week, until fading out completely occurred. Nevertheless, there was and still is follow up contact

between the ability promoter and Christian and between the ability promoter and the employer or employees.

Christian needed training on how to socially behave at work. Whenever the fellow employees joked about something, Christian would perpetuate the joke and would not concentrate on his work. He thus needed to understand that there is time for work and time for joking. His fellow mates at work also needed to understand that they must avoid joking whilst at work, so as not to distract Christian. The ability promoter explained this concept to the employees, who co-operated.

Christian is doing very fine at work, even though he would like to work in the mornings instead of in the afternoon. Christian works on a part time basis, 20 hours a week. He works from Monday to Friday from 14.00 till 19.00. Transport is provided by Dar tal-Providenza. When Christian first started work, his ability promoter tried to train him in catching a bus, but he observed that Christian sleeps on the bus. He thus would not be aware on which bus stage to stop to arrive at work. Moreover, the bakery where he works is situated in a road frequented by heavy traffic, where there are no traffic lights or zebra crossings which Christian can use in order to arrive at work.

Christian's work consists in putting a loaf of bread in a machine, which slices bread. When the slices of bread come out of the machine, Christian has to place the slices in a bag and tie a knot. The bag with bread is then to be placed on a shelf. At first, Christian had a problem with tying the knot of the plastic bag, because of lack of finger dexterity. However the ability promoter dedicated time to enable Christian to learn the task properly.

CASE STUDY 3

Name: Annie (the name has been changed for ethical purposes)

Age: 52

Persons present in the interview: Annie, support worker from Dar tal-Providenza and her flat mates.

Annie has been living at Dar tal-Providenza for as long as she can remember. In fact she was just a little child when her parents referred her to Dar tal-Providenza.

She worked at the workshop of Dar tal-Providenza, together with fellow persons with disabilities. Work from factories was brought at the workshop, for the persons with disabilities to work on. Like the other persons, Annie worked on a part time basis at the workshop, where

she woke up early for work and also had two quarter of an hour breaks. Although cut away from the community, the workshop served to train Annie for work in a factory.

Two years ago, a job finder from Dar tal-Providenza contacted a well-known local company and arranged for Annie to have an interview with the personnel manager. However during their meeting, the manager started to bring about excuses so as to prevent Annie from starting to work there. He asked Annie whether she would eventually use the lift alone. She explained that she would not abuse taking the lift alone, because of fear of trouble with the lift. After the interview, the manager did not contact Annie again and did not ask her to start working within the company.

In the year 2000, a job finder from Dar tal-Providenza contacted a factory and asked whether the manager would be willing to employ persons with disabilities. The manager agreed and a group of 8 persons with disabilities started to work in the factory. Annie was one of the persons who started to work at the factory.

Annie now works within supported competitive employment. Annie was trained for the job on site. An ability promoter from Dar tal-Providenza, a supervisor from the factory and a fellow worker on a voluntary basis, supervise Annie's work. Her work consists in checking items to see whether there are defective ones. The faulty items are given to the factory supervisor. Annie understands that if one of her supervisors points out a mistake she may have done, it is for her own good that this is done. The items she checks range from plastic false nails to false eyelashes. Annie is delighted with the job she is engaged in.

Annie works at the factory on a part time basis, from Monday to Friday. She admits that when she first started to work there, she used to sleep during work hours, because she was not used to staying awake for a long time without taking a nap. However, by time she got used to the working hours. During the break, she interacts with fellow employees.

Annie lives in a flat in the community, provided by Dar tal-Providenza. Four other persons with disabilities live in the same flat. Annie is involved in many community organisations. She is a member of a Church group who meet at set times during the week to pray, sing and organise Masses within various villages. She also takes part in the drama sessions organised by Dar tal-Providenza. In fact, at the moment, her drama group is preparing for a festival, which will be held in June.

CASE STUDY 4

Name: Luke (the name has been changed for ethical purposes)

Age: 28

Persons present in the interview: Luke and his parents.

Luke attended a mainstream primary school until he was ten years old. He then started to frequent a mainstream craft school, where he learnt the skill of tiling floors. However, the years he spent at the craft school were not happy ones. He was constantly bullied whilst being there. At one time, his peers attacked him and he had to be taken home bleeding. The head teacher's advice was for his parents not to let him attend a mainstream school.

After he finished school, he began to work at his uncle's business. And after some time, the same uncle arranged for Luke to have work from factories brought at home. He spent about six years working, on items brought from factories, at home. At that time, he did not have any friends. He spent so much time during the day sitting on a chair doing work and eating without doing exercise of any sort, that he became lonely and overweight. Luke managed to earn a lot of money during this span of time. All the while, his parents were worried about the situation. Although they knew that at home Luke was safe from being bullied, they also knew that he was being deprived from having a social life.

In 1995, when Luke was 22 years old, a relative encouraged Luke's parents to contact The Eden Foundation. Luke's mother was sceptical about the idea at first, but then she agreed that a try would do no harm. The Eden Foundation was contacted and a member of the agency came to visit Luke and his family at their home. He saw Luke at work, and he agreed with the parents that Luke needed to be part of the community.

From then on, Luke started to attend the programs offered by The Eden Foundation. The agency enabled Luke and other persons with disability, to visit different work sites. The service providers could thus see towards which kind of work was Luke most attracted to. As part of the training course he work-trained at two different job-sites, doing cleaning work. During both times, a job coach trained him to do the work. Whilst on training, Luke worked 3 days a week, where through the system offered by the ETC the employer co-operative of The Eden Foundation paid half of Luke's wage, while the ETC paid the rest of the wage.

In the year 2000, after the training experiences, he had enjoyed, Luke started to work within the employer co-operative of The Eden Foundation. During the first days of work within the co-operative, he worked on the inside of agency's building, doing cleaning work. A job coach trained him to do the work.

Luke is still working within the same co-operative, but nowadays he is part of a mobile work crew. He works together with two other persons with disability and a supervisor from The Eden Foundation, doing service jobs in the community. The supervisor searches for tenders within the community. Luke, together with the other workers, have managed to be engaged in various types of work, including work in local councils, cleaning roundabouts from weeds and posting mail at various Bank branches.

Luke works five days a week from Monday to Friday, from 8.00 till 16.00, and is paid a full wage. The Eden Foundation trained Luke in catching the bus from his hometown to Valletta, where he then catches The Eden Foundation's transport to work.

Luke is active on a social basis as well. The Eden Foundation, has moved him into an organisation, situated in Valletta. Moreover, during the summer, trips to and stays in Gozo are organised by The Eden Foundation. Needless to say, Luke is enjoying a full social life and is very glad at work.

CASE STUDY 5

Name: Shirley (the name has been changed for ethical purposes)

Age: 32

Persons present in the interview: Shirley, support worker from Dar tal-Providenza and her flat mates.

Shirley is a 32 year old lady who has a mild, cognitive disability. She is a very independent person and lives in a house in the community with a group of other persons with disability.

When she was young, Shirley attended a mainstream primary school but then she started to attend a special school. After finishing the special school at 21 years, Shirley was assisted by a teacher who continued to help her. Moreover, she started to register for work at the ETC where she spent 4 years waiting for a reply.

When she was 25 years, Shirley started to attend the Eden Foundation's Programme. There she followed the Individualised Transition Program, where she learnt various independent living skills, which she has previously lacked. In fact, Shirley has learnt various skills such as catching the bus, handling money and also making use of traffic lights and the zebra-cross. In other words, the Eden Programme enabled Shirley to be taught how to do things independently. She finds that this practice now has given her a lot of satisfaction.

After finishing the Transition Programme at The Eden Foundation, Shirley was offered employment in a rubber factory. A trainer (job coach) from the programme explained what the work in the factory would entail. Shirley considered the job opportunity to be ideal for her. When Shirley started the training process she was assisted by a job coach, who helped her in carrying out the task that she was assigned to do and as time went by she got used to the job. The job coach also helped Shirley in becoming familiar with the work site and with the rules in the factory. After some time, the job coach faded out and Shirley started to carry out the task, without supervision. Her work consists in checking the rubber washers and this has been her task since she has entered the factory.

Now, Shirley has been working in the rubber factory for the past seven years and she is an inspector. When she first started work 7 years ago, Shirley used to work on a shift from seven in the morning till half past three in the afternoon. Shirley works on a full-time basis and she is presently working on a shift basis from six in the morning to half past twelve or on another shift starting at two in the afternoon and ending at half eight in the evening.

Shirley describes the relationship with her fellow workers as ones that she considers to be excellent. She remembered the way she used to feel during her first days at work, where she was very shy and used to prefer to stay alone. Then, the fellow workers invited Shirley to join them in the canteen them during the breaks. She thus began to interact with the others.

Shirley leads a very independent life. She lives in a house in the community with a group of five friends with disability. Before she came to living in the house, Shirley used to live at Dar tal-Providenza. She has been living in the community for the past 3 years. Shirley commented that in this house, she feels better than she felt at Dar tal-Providenza and she is very happy. The house chores are shared between the occupants of the house where every person carries out different tasks. Shirley describes how her typical day with her house mates consists of going out for work, going shopping and going for walks in the area near her home.. In fact, Shirley likes to spend her free time strolling with her dog. Shirley is also a member in two different organisations, where she meets other people without disabilities and goes out with them. Shirley and her house mates are integrated in the community and they attend the local Sunday Mass and participate willingly in the various activities which are held in the community. The house residents still keep in contact with Dar tal-Providenza whenever Dar tal-Providenza organises various recreational activities and outings for the weekends. Shirley and her housemates make sure to attend. During the summer they also spend some days in a Dar tal-Providenza summer residence in Gozo. Shirley has also been abroad to places like France, Rome, Belgium, London, Lourdes and Portugal.

Appendix C

Interview Questions for Schools

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the students' life?

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITPs) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?
 - Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How often does this happen?

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects

- Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?
5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP?
- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
 - Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents
6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?
- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
 - Are the students taken on job sites?
 - Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?
7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
- In what kind of activities are the encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
 - Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Special School A

Interview with Head Teacher

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the students' life?

As such, we do not have any transition Programmes from school to work for our students, because most of the students will be going at the Adult Training Centres. However we do have students who are very able. I am now thinking about this visually impaired student who is just going through his transition. In fact, the transition co-ordinator for special schools, is doing the transition Programmes, not only with students in our school, but also with students of the other special schools.

The school focuses attention on academic skills for the students to learn. Thus, for instance, teachers make it possible for the students to learn Braille. I think that in this way, they will eventually have wider options with regards to the availability of employment.

And we also include other skills in the IEP/ITP of our students. One of our students is a 16-year old girl who is hearing and visually impaired. Her teacher takes her on shopping trips to Valletta. Most importantly, her mother joins them on these trips. The Programme includes the involvement of the family, since it is they whom she lives with, after all. These shopping experiences also improve her communication skills.

It is one of the school policies that students learn certain life skills, such as doing the bed, washing the plates and so forth, which are the basic skills needed for an independent life. As soon as the students enter our school, the teachers get to know them and to reflect upon the skills, which could lead the students to likely jobs. Thus as you can see, the students can use these skills not only while at home, but they could also make use of them in sheltered workshops.

The teaching of such life skills starts as soon as the students are ready for them, therefore the whole process is based on an individual basis.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITPs) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?

- When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
- Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

The IEP/ITP starts also as soon as the students enter the school. It involves an on-going process, till the students leave the school. The teachers do the IEP/ITP two times during the scholastic year. The first IEP/ITP is prepared in January and the other one is prepared in June. The IEP/ITP prepared in June, is carried out at this time of the year in order to include the students' summer holidays. The parents are involved in the making of the IEP/ITP, especially in the creation of the IEP/ITP of June, since the students will be at home at that time.

With regards to the skills, which are included in the IEP/ITP, here again the planning is dependent on the individuals, their skills and their abilities. If, for example, a student has multiple disabilities, the IEP/ITP would include stimulation of hearing and sight, feeding and toileting. As the students grow up, emphasis is placed on the learning of academic skills. However, academic skills are not taught on their own, but in a context, involving the learning of other skills on the way. Thus, for instance, recognition of numbers is learnt in the context of going shopping for a number of things. In this way the teachers would be taking into consideration the students' development as a whole, where every step in the process is connected with another step. As the students grow older, the teachers would see whether the students are ready for the learning of social skills. Outings to public places are thus organised, where the students learn how to behave in different places.

If we then see that the students are ready for vocational training, the school starts to contact agencies such as Sedqa to come and talk to the students.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?
 - Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How often does this happen?

The teacher prepares the IEP/ITP, after different people, who are involved with the students, have been contacted. The physiotherapist, the speech therapist, the peripatetic teacher may be the professionals who the teacher may have contacted. The teachers have meetings with each of these professionals, as well as with the parents. However, the meetings do not necessarily involve all the people mentioned at the same time. The parents come to school and discuss the IEP/ITP with the teacher. In cases where the different parties do not agree with sections of the IEP/ITP, changes can be made. Moreover, a copy of the IEP/ITP is given to the parents, while a copy is left at school with the teachers. Meetings with each of the members of the IEP/ITPs may happen in cases of the students' progress. Moreover, professionals who have been privately engaged by parents, are also contacted.

Changes in the IEP/ITP goals may happen in cases where, for instance, a student is absent for a long time from school. If a teacher is transferred from the class, the IEP/ITP is handed over to the next teacher. The kindergarten assistants, who would have helped the past teacher, would of course explain and talk about the student with the new teacher.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects

- Other aspects?

On the whole, the students do not have the ability to discuss the IEP/ITP with the teacher or the other members. Whenever possible and according to the students' abilities, the students are included in the making of the IEP/ITP. We have, for instance, a student who would like to learn the computer. The school has thus arranged for a professional to be sent over to the school to teach the computer to this student.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP?

- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
- Is it formal or informal contact?
- What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
- Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents

The parents can phone and speak with the teachers any time they wish. They even keep regular contact through a diary, which is passed on from the teacher to the parents, where comments about the student are written down.

Twice during the scholastic year, the parents come to discuss the IEP/ITP. Once a month, parents' days are organised by the school. During such days, speakers may come to speak to the parents, and the parents are invited in the students' classes.

Parents' wishes are taken into consideration. If for instance they would like the student to have frequent visits from the occupational therapist, or for them to have some type of exercises, their wishes are discussed. This is also very dependent on the type of wishes, which the parents may have. There may be cases, where the parents' wishes are far-fetched or not of use for the students.

Parents are kept informed about what is happening in the students' schools. A circular is sent to the parents every now and then, where they are informed about events happening in the school.

Parents are also kept informed about how they can aid the students at home. This is very important. The school also hopes that continuation of the students' learning happens at home. What the students learn at school, should be reinforced at home. This is the aim behind the contact diary. If a student has had a bad day at school, the parents would be informed. If, on the other hand, the student has had an achievement at home, the teacher would be informed. On the contact diary both positive and negative comments are written down

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?

The IEP/ITP starts to include contacts with the world of work, as soon as the students are ready. The transition co-ordinator is currently involving some of our students in our school, in a Programme, where they are taken to the one of the Local Councils and to other work places, so that the students will have contact with the world of work. Some parents may be a hindrance, since they may be over-protective.

The school tries to contact different employment agencies and to have the students apply for Programmes within these agencies. But one of the main problems with the agencies, is that most of the time, they don't have specific Programmes, which cater for the students' needs and abilities. What the agencies try to do is adapt an existing Programme to the needs of the students

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
- In what kind of activities are they encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
 - Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

We do try to encourage the students to participate in extra-curricular activities. We have a student who will be abroad in a few days. She will take part in the Olympics organised in Poland, for persons with disabilities.

Special School B

Interview with Head Teacher

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the students' life?

The mission statement of the school is that the students will have a better quality of life. There are some students who have the potential and who are ready for the transition Programme but there are others who need more assistance in order to be prepared for this Programme. After having finished the transition Programme the students can choose to go either to the ETC, to the Adult Training Centre or to the Eden Foundation. Although every student is different and the preparation for the transition Programme depends on individual basis, parents seem to be a common problem. Sometimes we find that parents are creating obstacles because they do not want the students to work. Transport is not an issue problem since it is made available.

The school starts preparing and implementing the transition Programme for students who are aged fourteen to fifteen years old. However the formal transition Programme, which is in the hands of the transition co-ordinator of special schools, starts to happen 2 years before the students get out of school, that is when the students are about nineteen years old

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITPs) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Each student attending this school has an IEP/ITP, which starts to be implemented as soon as the students get in the school. Here, in this school we try to teach our students various skills, which can help them for possible future employment. The students learn occupational skills such as sequencing, where they learn to move from one task to another task; the concept of time; and to produce crafts, where the crafts include creations from different materials such as wood and paper. We think that social aspects are very important and so these aspects are included in the IEP/ITP. For instance at the moment we are delivering sex education lessons for a particular class of students. These students need to know about sex education.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

The members who meet to speak about the IEP/ITP team include the teacher and other professionals, but the members vary according to individual students. For instance if a speech therapist or physiotherapist attends the student, they are invited to talk with the teacher. The teacher, parents and students themselves, particularly those who are able, participate in the planning of the IEP/ITP.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?

- Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
- To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
- What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects

We try to give the students a full say in the IEP/ITP. This is our concern. After all, they are the ones who are going through the transition Programme.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP?

- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
- Is it formal or informal contact?
- What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
- Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

Meetings with parents are organised and parents are willing to participate during IEP/ITP meetings. Parents are aware of employment issues but they do not want their students to work because they think that other employees might make fun of the students. These are negative views, because the students are able to work as others persons can. However, pensions are the main problem for the parents. They think that the students will loose pensions for good, when they start working. But the truth is that if the students will stop working, they will start to get the pension again. In other words, the parents are not interested in letting the students work and so there is no co-operation or appreciation from the parents. Insurance policies do not exist in Malta and the question is that of changing policies.

6. Does the IEP/ITP include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the students' school leaving date)?

- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with Employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?

We try to introduce students to the world of work. This trend started to take place 2 years ago where the school set up a bazaar in order for our students to sell crafts and earn money for themselves. Each of the students was given a role in the bazaar and everyone was responsible for their work. This activity was also included in the planning of the IEP/ITP. However, the mentality, which everyone holds, is very difficult to change. People are not aware that students with disabilities have different abilities. As a school, we also organise visits to work sites, which are also included in the IEP/ITP. Hopefully, we wish that in two to three years time, there will be contacts with the ETC or other agencies where students can have the opportunity to be involved in work on-sites.

In order for a transition Programme to be successful, there needs to be a special curriculum, which caters for each person. In fact, a transition Programme of this kind was created at another special school, where a particular curriculum was created for the students attending that school. People think that generalisation for students with disabilities happens, but students attending this school find it very difficult to apply a learnt task in a particular situation to a different situation. They are not able to associate one situation with another as they have very profound disabilities, where many of them have a very low IQ.

I think that training of functional skills is important and it should take place within the community. I proposed a transition Programme to a private service and employment agency. The planning took 4 years to be finished. The most important element of the transition Programme is that the skills, which the students are able to perform, are analysed. For instance, one of the skills which one needs to possess in order to work in a cockpit is to be cautious, not to touch anything. Therefore, if a person with disability does not know how to control himself, he is not able to perform that kind of job. The opportunity of job-matching depends on the person's disability, skills, abilities, and other factors such as the way fellow workers look at the person. Therefore, peer preparation is considered to be very important and there should be a person on the work site who helps the persons with disabilities. The persons responsible for the persons with disabilities have to get to know them well in order to be able to help them.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
- In what kind of activities are the students encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
 - Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Our school encourages various community activities such as shopping trips, carnival activities, Christmas activities and others. Moreover, we try to work with another school, in the mainstream. These activities are serving as opportunities for inclusion.

Special School C

Interview with the Head Teacher

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the students' life?

At the moment, the transition Programme is being carried out with 14 students whose age ranges from eighteen to nineteen years. The students will leave school at age nineteen. After completing this transition Programme, the students can go to the Adult Training Centre. Another choice which parents can consider is that of sending their students to The Eden Foundation's Transition Programme or to the ETC. But these options depend on the parents' own initiative. If the parents do not wish to have the students engage in the Programmes of employment and service agencies, the students can attend the Adult Training Centre. At the beginning of the year, the Head of School, the transition co-ordinator for special schools and the parents meet with the co-ordinator of the Adult Training Centre, where they speak about the life which the young adults will lead at the Centre.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITPs) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

An IEP/ITP is planned for each student and it starts as soon as they enter the school. The IEP/ITP is student-oriented and is based according to individual needs and abilities. Therefore, goals are set according to the students' abilities. For instance, there may be a student who learns a particular skill in one month and a different student who may learn the

same skill in two months. The goals of the IEP/ITP of the first student will vary from that of the second student. The most important thing is that the students make progress and that they achieve the planned goals, even if learning process will take a long time.

Activities, which are included in the IEP/ITP, are outings. The excursions are organised for students with mental disability, although students with physical disability are taken on outings as well. Life skills are regarded as the most important skills, because these might help the students in their future lives. So strictly speaking the IEP/ITP focuses on the acquisition of necessary life skills.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

The persons in charge of the IEP/ITP are the teachers, while the parents collaborate with them by reinforcing the skills acquired in the classroom, at home. The IEP/ITP for the students, who are attending their final years at the school, is planned in the classroom. Whenever teachers find problems, they can talk with the co-ordinator of the transition Programme. The teachers may discuss the objectives of the IEP/ITP with the transition co-ordinator or with any other professionals (such as speech therapists or occupational therapists).

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?

- Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
- To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
- What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects

- Vocational aspects
- Other aspects?

Students are given the opportunity to tell us about their wishes but their participation depends on their ability. In this school, students vary a lot from each other. There are those students who are totally independent and who can work on their own and there are those who need help and are partly dependent. The more able students may sometimes be capable of expressing their wishes.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP?

- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
- Is it formal or informal contact?
- What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
- Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

The teachers encourage the parents to reinforce IEP/ITP goals at home. In fact, regular informal meetings with the parents take place. Regress may happen for various reasons, including home or social conditions. Social conditions, which might weaken their achievement, are common, especially when the peer groups negatively influence the young adults with disability. When this happens, parents are asked for information about the students' life outside the school. Meetings are called for and the teachers may advise the parents about what can be done for the students' well being.

The teachers investigate the students' behaviour in the classrooms, where, for instance they try search for a problem, which might be causing a student to sleep in the class or to be away from school for 15 days. Different students may have different problems. Sometimes students might be acting strangely at school as a result of health problems in their families. We had a case, for instance, where the mother of a student had to go through a surgical operation and she wanted the student to stay with her. In cases like this, the students will obviously be excused.

6. Does the IEP/ITP include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the students' school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?

Yes, work is seen to be very important and the teachers have a section in the IEP/ITP, which is linked to work skills. Moreover, the school organises work site visits for the students. the visits may help the students in choosing the work they would like to do in their future. In fact, we organise 2 outings every month, where each time a group of students from 3 classes are taken out. The students who are more able are taken to work sites.

A few weeks ago a group was taken to the O'Neill factory. During the visit, the students were encouraged to try working on the machines. I believe that hands-on experiences are the best types of training. In a few days, another group will be going to Hal Qormi's Local Council, where the students will broaden their experience, with regards to different work environments. The visits help the students in their observation of different types of work, but visits are not enough. I think that there are various other elements, which are needed before students with disabilities may be able to be engaged in. The most crucial elements include the parents' initiative, the students' abilities of the and the amount of vacancies, which are available. We do not have contacts with employment agencies or work sites. Such contacts are left in the hands of the transition co-ordinator. She is the one who makes contacts with the different agencies or work sites.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
- In what kind of activities are the students encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or other leisure activities)?
 - Are the students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Students in this school are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities. The school organises various outings where the students participate in leisure activities. At the moment, we are taking groups of students, to the bowling centre. Another group of students is taken to Targa Gap, where the students produce crafts for leisure.

Special School D

Interview with Teacher

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the students' life?

A formal transition Programme is taking place in our school. This transition Programme came into being two years ago. Students who will be leaving school in one year time assist to this transition Programme.

The transition period is being planned with care and the main target behind this Programme is that the students proceed gradually to the Adult Training Centres. In fact, the students visit the Adult Training Centre once or twice a week. In other words, the students keep on going to the Centre until they will grow more familiar to the place and until they start to attend the Centre on a daily basis. We are hoping that in the future the transition Programme will start two years before the students leave school. This is the aim of the transition co-ordinator, who is responsible for this Programme.

The school caters for different students and students in each class have different abilities and needs. In the school, there is a class for young students aged from 4 to 7 years old; two intermediate classes; and four classes for students aged 18 to 24 years.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITPs) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Our school system is based on the IEP/ITP, where an IEP/ITP is planned for every student in this school. Moreover, the IEP/ITP is worked out throughout the years, which the students spend at school. The system of the IEP/ITP is an on-going process, where students can learn a variety of basic skills. The Programme is always prepared according to the students' abilities and we try to give them training in various skills such as manipulation skills. Simple skills are taught to the students, who may be less able but who nevertheless need these skills in order to become as independent as possible. The life skills include skills such as reading the signs on a toilet door, the entrance or exit sign; the use of a calculator; handling of money (although they don't know how to give change); reading the clock; and others.

Students in this school are also encouraged to work on various tasks which can be described as crafts where they do needlework, filigree and pottery. Sessions where the students cook are also carried out in the kitchenettes and there the students practice certain skills like using a knife to peel oranges. Although these students take time to learn, in the end, it is found that they are able to learn. The aspects, which are included in the IEP/ITP depend on the individual abilities. For instance, I use the Portage system to assess my students in the classroom. I use a checklist system, which includes target agendas for the main basic skills. So, my role as a teacher is that of identifying objectives for each student according to the checklist. The IEP/ITP always depends on the goals which the teacher sets for each individual student and on the time, which the student takes to acquire the skill. The aspects of the IEP/ITP are various and include personal care and hygiene, social skills, practical reading (such as reading entrance signs), which are basic skills which we use in our daily lives. Each class has the bathroom and cloak room facility where students are trained on how to take care of themselves like for instance brushing their teeth or bathing.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

The class teacher is the one who decides on the planning of the IEP/ITP. Sometimes the kindergarten assistants aiding the teachers in the classroom, are also involved in this process. I think that the teacher is more skilled and qualified for this type of work and this is why the planning is left in her hands. At the beginning of each year, the teachers and the kindergarten assistants identify the aspects, which they are going to work on with particular students. The planning occurs during informal meetings and the IEP/ITP is organised three times during a scholastic year. Moreover, objectives for each student are set for each term and there are no constraints on the teacher to reach all the objectives, which she plans. If the teacher finds that the goals have been achieved in less time than was planned, she can start working on other skills. In the end, the individual's achievement is what is most important for us.

The students attend four different classes during their stay in school, where they attend the early, the middle, the intermediate, and the adult classes. Therefore, the teacher who plans the IEP/ITP is changed 4 times, during the students' stay in the school. When students change classes, the new teacher takes into consideration the IEP/ITP of the previous year.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

To tell the truth, the students don't have a say in the planning of the IEP/ITP since they are not able to do so. In fact, there were very rare incidents where students expressed their wishes to learn something new. There were instances, where students were keen to work on a particular skill such as filigree or rock stone sculpture and the teachers were available to train them in these skills.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP?
- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
 - Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid their students when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

Contacts with the parents are frequent, where they are contacted by phone in case of problems or are contacted and informed about activities organised by the school such as sports days or other outings. Moreover, parents are always willing to participate when reviews are discussed.

Before the transition Programme starts, a meeting is held for all the parents where we give them information about the options, which their students can take as soon as they finish school. They are informed that at the ETC, the students can be trained for particular jobs.

At the beginning of the scholastic year, the class teachers meet the parents and the aspirations of the parents are taken into consideration. Moreover, the teachers always ask the parents about what they wish their students to learn. There were times where the parents were consulted about the IEP/ITP. We also try to work hand in hand with other agencies, if the students are attending any agencies like The Eden Foundation. In these instances, teachers ask for the Programme, which these agencies may be carrying out with the student, so that the teachers would reinforce the learning of the skills.

We also try to educate the parents, about how they can help the students at home. For instance, persons with Downs Syndrome have a tendency to become overweight. While at school the students are taught to eat healthy food, the parents give them junk food to eat. We find that it is important to advise parents about such issues.

6. Does the IEP/ITP include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the students' school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contact is there?

The IEP/ITP does not allow contacts with work but the school organises various visits in order to make the students aware of different places. For example, the students are going to visit Marks & Spencer, where they will acquire knowledge about clothes and labelling codes. Contacts with the world of work are mainly carried out during the transition Programme.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are the students encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

As a school, we are conscious of the benefits which students can acquire from participating in leisure activities. So, students are very much encouraged to participate in various activities. In the year 2000, there were students who won medals in the Special Olympics. The school is also equipped with a gym where students can practise their favourite sports. Students also participate in Carnival activities and in the Christmas Concert. Moreover, we also encourage the parents to get the students involved in youth centres or other organisations in the community.

Boys Junior Lyceum E

Interview with Guidance Teacher

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the students' life?

As guidance teachers, we try to do what is possible to include the boys with disability into our school. We don't have many cases of students with disabilities, but of course we do try to treat each case differently according to the students' individual needs and abilities. I can speak of one case, where the boy is hearing impaired. At the beginning of each scholastic year I send a letter to each of his teachers. In it I explain what the teachers can do in order for the boy to follow the lessons as smoothly as the other non-disabled peers do. I recommend that they make him sit at the front of the class, and that if he asks for revision they should be available in their free hours.

We make it a point that from the time they enter the school, they see their self-worth. We try to give them the self-confidence needed to survive in the world. If they do not speak up when something troubles them, we cannot help them. We thus give them the skills to be independent. In this case, when a problem pops up, they know that it is they who should speak about it, not their parents or any one else. This skill may well serve them when they are fully employed, where for instance in case of problems at work they know they can refer to their employer.

As soon as they enter the school, we start giving them the skills to 'survive' in the school environment. From my part, I never give up and I make the students see that I am always ready to help. In the case of the student who is hearing impaired, it took a month before he had enough confidence to speak with me and to tell me what he liked or disliked about the school system and other things. But I never gave up and I was always available. It is very important that the student fend for himself. Moreover, the student is the only person who can tell what facilities he may need during his stay at school. We thus train the students to

reflect about the facilities provided by the school and to observe whether these are making their stay at school more comfortable for their individual needs. In the case of a boy who has visual impairment, the school can provide bigger writing paper, lenses and even extra time during, for instance the school examinations. Moreover, after his first examination, this boy came to me and told me whether the facilities he was provided with were effective or not.

It is also very important that we evaluate each of the processes, which have been utilised, in order to see which were right and which were wrong, and to pinpoint out what can be changed for the better.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITP) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Some of the teachers do not accept that they have students with disabilities in their classes. They think that these students act in the way they do because they want to profit from their disability. Other teachers are very helpful and they fully include them in their classes. However we do not have any kind of individual Programme for them. We do not have facilitators at school. And we as guidance teachers are so much overloaded with work – we each have about 300 students to cater for!

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?
 - Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
 - Why does this happen?

- How often does this happen?

There are no Programmes prepared for the students with disabilities in our school. the guidance teachers may aid the students in the choice of subjects.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Students with disabilities participate in the school life as the other students.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP Planner?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
 - Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

We do send to speak with the parents at the beginning of the students' scholastic year. We speak to the parents of the students as a whole, not on an individual basis. But then each case is different. For instance, we speak a lot with the parents of the student who has a visual impairment, since the boy is not much responsible. On the other hand, the boy with a hearing impairment is very responsible, and we do not feel the need to keep frequent contact with his parents.

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the students' school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contact is there?

Visits to the workplace are organised for all the fifth formers. Moreover, we as guidance teachers direct our work with these students more towards general skills than towards direct work experience. We are also in the process of producing a book, where each of the subjects offered on option by the school when the students are towards the end of their Form 2, has a list of the skills which the subject entails. The students would thus know which skills they would be developing in the choice of a given subject. Through this book, we would be trying to reach each student on an individual basis.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are the encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

As guidance teachers, we have so many students to cater for, that we cannot possibly keep track of what each and every student is involved in. We of course do try to encourage involvement in extra curricular activities but as I said, the guidance teachers do not enter into that kind of domain.

Boys Junior Lyceum F

Interview with Guidance Teacher

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the students' life?

There are few students with disabilities who attend this school and so there isn't a special Programme for them. One of the students with whom we were working with, last year was a student with a hearing impairment. At that moment, the student didn't have a special Programme prepared for him but he followed the lessons with the others. During some lessons, a peripatetic teacher used to come and help him with the difficulties, while at the same time reinforcement of the work done in the classroom, was done. The teachers in school helped him in various ways. For instance, as the student had a hearing aid, which picked every single sound in the classroom, the teachers put rubber caps on chairs so that when someone moved a chair, the student would not be disturbed by the noise.

The student with hearing impairment went to Targa Gap where he learned a trade and earned some pocket money. The school also tried to socially help the student. In this school, we consider integration as being very crucial, to the students' well being. So, integration takes place as soon as the students start attending this school. The PSE teacher takes the students on an orientation visit around the school. This is done so that the students will not feel lost and so that they will get used to the school environment.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITP) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the student's life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects

- Vocational aspects
- Other aspects?

In August, we organise meetings for the parents whose students will be entering the school. During the meetings parents are given a sheet to fill in, where they have to write important information which would be useful to the teachers. Information, such as the status of the parents, the guardians of the student, the number of siblings in the family, and any health problems, which the student might have, are listed. Afterwards, the guidance teachers go through these papers and seek the boys who have been identified as having problems. Steps are taken in order to help these students to overcome the problems. For instance in the past, whenever we had dyslexic students, we tried to help by providing special exam papers that are larger than normal papers and which have appropriate print.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

Peripatetic teachers come from the Department of Education help these students. On the other hand there isn't an individual Programme, to cater for these students. We try to find relevant literature about the disability of the students, in order to help the teachers. In fact, we give this literature to the teachers and to the staff who will be teaching the students. The teachers will thus know how to assist the students when problems arise.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?

- Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
- To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
- What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects

- Personal and social development aspects
- Vocational aspects
- Other aspects?

Yes, we try to give the students the opportunity to speak about their wishes and we try to do our best in order to follow their wishes. For instance, in Form 2 the students have to choose 2 subjects. A dyslexic student chose history and the school enabled him to study the subject, even though only two students chose this subject. We try to see what is the best of the students. Sometimes students may choose a subject which is not appropriate for them and so the guidance teachers talk to the students and help them to look for other solutions. If we see that the subjects are too demanding for them, we talk with the parents about the situation.

There is a one to one relationship between the students and the guidance teachers. For instance in the choice of subjects or other decisions, the guidance teacher, peripatetic teacher, the Head of School, the students and the parents are involved.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP Planner?

- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
- Is it formal or informal contact?
- What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
- Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

There is regular contact with parents of 'normal' students but in case of students with problems, contact is more frequent. Guidance teachers and teachers explain the skills which the student will learn of each subject, to parents. Parents have the ultimate say, even though decisions might not be good for the students' welfare.

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the students' school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?

Those who may need information about something may make one to one contacts with the guidance teachers. But on the whole, the PSE teacher or the guidance teachers arrange for meetings with students, as a whole group. Visits to different work sites are organised, when the students are in Form 5. Persons with disabilities are taken on these outings with the other students. We feel that integration with fellow mates is important. If persons with disabilities are taken on their own, they might feel excluded. Their mates help them a lot.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are the encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Persons with disabilities are socially integrated in the school. They are encouraged to participate in sports activities such as in volleyball and in basketball. We check that everyone participates. Students are encouraged to participate in activities organised by the School such as Sports Day, Prize Day, plays, Lejla Maltija and Carnival activities.

Boys Secondary School I

This interview took place in a staff room, where a facilitator, a teacher and a guidance teacher responded to the questions.

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the student's life?

Facilitator - What the students assist to in school is social inclusion, since academically they have a separate Programme. The disabled students I am a facilitator to, are still young to start any Programme, which could lead them to employment – they're still in Form 1!

Teacher - I think that as a whole we are not yet prepared for the inclusion of students with disabilities to be in mainstream schools. I think that first of all, the teachers as well as the students in mainstream should be truly prepared before disabled students enter mainstream school.

Facilitator - From social aspects, disabled students are fully included at school. But there is also another problem. This area secondary school has many problems. Is it thus the ideal school to place students with disabilities into?

Guidance teacher - Let me tell you how unprepared us teachers and facilitators are about disabled students. We only come to know that a disabled student will be attending our classes, on the first day the students actually start school. The contact which took place between the facilitator and the disabled boys took place outside of school hours and out of the facilitator's own initiative.

Teacher - There was once a case where a boy with a hearing impairment started to attend this school later than the others (whereas the other students started in the last week of September, he started in the first week of October). The form teacher could thus prepare his class mates beforehand, and he could also take the disabled boy around the school, to help him get a feeling about the school in general. I think that that experience was very good for him.

Guidance Teacher - Another thing which I'd like to add, is that in the courses we attend to train us to become guidance teachers, we are not trained to cater for persons with disabilities. Moreover, as guidance teachers we are already overloaded with catering for many students at school. Ideally, there should be a director who could manage the transition, for students with disabilities.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITP) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?

- When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
- Which aspects of the student's life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Facilitator - Yes, I prepare IEP/ITPs, but I only include with academic aspects in the planning.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

Facilitator - I am the person responsible for the IEP/ITP. The parents may be consulted, but since the IEP/ITP includes only academic aspects, the decisions are left in my hands.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?

- Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
- To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?

- What say (if any) do the students have in :
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Facilitator - The students are still young to be able to have a say in their IEP/ITP.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP Planner?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
 - Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

Facilitator - The parents are very co-operative and we keep contact on a regular basis since they collect the students at school, so I see them every day.

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?
 - At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
 - Are the students taken on job sites?
 - Are there any contacts with Employment agencies? If so, what kind of contact is there?

Facilitator - The students I cater for are still in Form 1! They cannot possibly start doing any preparation at this stage.

Guidance teacher - When the students are in Form 5 they go to visit to different work sites. The students with disabilities go to these visits with the other students.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are they encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Facilitator - I encourage the students to participate in the activities organised by the school. But participation in activities in the community, is left in the hands of the parents.

Boys Secondary School J

Interview with Guidance Teacher

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the student's life?

The facilitators work on the skills which the students will need for positive social behaviour, in their interactions with others within the school. The facilitator does not prepare the student for employment. Of course, later on in life, the students can eventually use such skills.

Having said that, the students with disabilities that we have in our school, learn the same skills as their non-disabled peers do. We do not have a separate Programme to cater for students with disabilities.

It is only now that we are having a larger number of students with disabilities in our school. And the school has a facilitator for every one or two students with disabilities. As guidance teachers, we work with the facilitator in cases where the students may have to be referred to a psychologist or a problem may have to be addressed to the parents. Nevertheless the contact between the parents and the facilitator are regular and do not always involve us as guidance teachers.

The facilitator starts to work with the students as soon as the students enter our school. The facilitators are doing a great job. There is no problem whatsoever between the facilitators and the teachers. There is a healthy co-operation between both parties, even in the staff rooms.

I believe that more often than not, it is only on the first day of school that the facilitators come to know the students they will be working with. Not only this, but also the records about the students arrive much later. In cases of medicines for example, we would have to

refer to the parents for information. I think that the facilitators, as well as the whole staff in general, should come to know about the students they will be working with, at least a year before the students actually start attending the school. Meetings with regards to the student should be held during the summer holidays before the students actually enter the school.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITP) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?

- When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
- Which aspects of the student's life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

These are in the hands of the facilitator, and strictly speaking I cannot talk about these Programmes, since I don't know anything about them.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

The facilitator is responsible for that. According to the students' individual needs, other professionals may be called in.

The workload for us as guidance teachers is high. I think that the Education Department is not catering for students with disabilities. We still have a long way ahead, for that to happen. The students with disabilities fall under the Special Education section. The Education Officer of this Department has to cater for all the schools. He has the responsibility of all the schools, and thus cannot be fixed in one school only.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

These kinds of decision is left in the hands of the facilitators.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP Planner?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
 - Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

There are actually no scheduled meetings involving the parents. They are only contacted when problems arise. At school we have an open door policy, and parents know that they can come and speak with any members of the staff whenever they want to.

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?
- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
 - Are the students taken on job sites?
 - Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contact is there?

Up till now, the student with disabilities that we have in our school, are still in the early Forms up to Form 3. Therefore no transition can actually happen before they arrive in their fifth Form.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
- In what kind of activities are the encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
 - Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Like the other students, students with disabilities are encouraged to participate in the school activities.

Girls Secondary School K

Interview with Facilitator

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the student's life?

As her facilitator, during the end of Form 4, I noticed that she is inclined towards computer studies. I thus started to take her to Mitts once a week during the school hours (from 10.30 – 12.00). In this way she misses some lessons, such as the Physics lesson. But together with the parents I thought it would be wiser if she missed subjects which are very difficult in terms of her ability and which she wouldn't eventually use in the long run, and focus on computer learning. Apart from computer training, she of course goes on visits to work sites with the other fifth formers.

Unfortunately, the ETC do not accept young people who are under 16 years of age, so she isn't given direct preparation for work, apart of course from the computer training. Because of her disability – the student is visually impaired – she thinks that a job such as a telephone operator would best suit her. But I don't think that finding a job would eventually be a problem for her, since her family owns a supermarket. I had this in mind, when I started taking her to the computer course at Mitts.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITP) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the student's life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Yes, I started doing the IEP/ITP when the student was in Form 2. In the IEP/ITP I try to include all aspects of her development such as physical skills, social skills, emotional skills, creative skills as well as independent living skills (the latter are included in subjects such as Home Economics).

I also try to include skills involved with employment in the IEP/ITP. One thing I worked on for instance, was training her to phone the school if she is sick. I think that in the future, when she is employed, she will need this skill in case of sickness or any other problems.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

Well, it is basically up to me to develop the IEP/ITP. However the teachers of the various subjects may be involved in assessing the student. The parents trust me very much because they know that I work for the student's best.

A few weeks ago, a professor came to observe what the student will need during her O'Level exams. He observed her methods of working so that during the actual exams, he would know what to expect from her.

During the half-yearly and final school exams, the school makes sure that she is provided with papers double the normal fullscap size. The student I work with followed the school syllabus during her first two years here, but then we opted for multilevel and alternate lessons.

The student I work with had another facilitator while she was in still in Primary school. I started working with the student, when she started attending this secondary school.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

The student has a say in the IEP/ITP. As I already said, when I saw that she was very interested in computer learning, I asked her whether she would like to train in this area. She was very enthusiastic and she learns very fast. Her parents are very cooperative. During the summer, I couldn't go to the computer course at Mitts with the student. It was her mother who took her there.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP Planner?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
 - Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

I try to keep contact with the parents on a regular basis. The student keeps a diary on which comments between the parents and I are passed on.

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with Employment agencies? If so, what kind of contact is there?

As I told you I try to include such skills as the one I explained before, like phoning and using money. But with regards to direct experience at work, she is included with the other fifth formers, when they go to visits at work sites.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are the encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Of course, I do encourage her to involve herself in extra curricular activities organised by the school. It is very important for her to participate in such activities because she makes other friends. I think that her social life is very important.

Girls Secondary School L

Interview with Facilitator

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the students' life?

The student who I am taking care of is a girl, who has Down Syndrome. At the time, I am emphasising on the learning of computer skills, as this would be useful for her future. I started working with the student whilst she was still in Form 1. I observe that the girl is very interested in computer skills, so computer training was started in Form 1, in order for her to gain such skills by the time she leaves school.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITP) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

The girl does well academically. On an individual basis, I help this pupil in working written comprehension and in doing physical exercises prescribed by the doctor. There is no need for individual attention in the academic aspects, as she gets along well with her class mates. She is very independent and she finds her own friends. Her class mates and the teachers accept her. Her friends stay with her during the break.

Her mother reinforces the work I do, at home. The student does not sit for the exams and so the assessments are taken from the exercises and homework. Life skills such as shopping trips and using a telecard are also taught.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?
- Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How often does this happen?

I am in charge of the Programme. There is no contact with the teachers of different subjects. In case of difficulties, I ask for the teachers' help. Before she entered this school, there was a MAPS session but I was not her facilitator at the time. Sometimes the social worker and the psychologist come to visit to see how the girl is proceeding.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
- Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in :
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

I talk with the school psychologist about what is best for her. I do not involve the student in the decision-making, such as in the choosing of subjects. Her wishes are more considered in social aspects such as outings.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP Planner?
- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory

- active
- passive
- other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
- Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

I have a very good relationship with the parents and sometimes I contact them even by writing notes on the contact diary book. At the moment, I am focusing on the value of money. For instance, during shopping trips a shopping list of about 2 items is prepared. The student goes in the shop to buy the items.

Parents have a say and are contacted in case of problems. They are advised on how to help the student. For instance, I advise her parents to take her shopping. We try to use the same teaching methods so that the student will not get mixed up. Decisions are taken jointly with the parents. For instance the parents do not want their student to sit for exams. The school arranged for the teachers to assess the student through homework and class work exercises.

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with Employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?

When I asked her parents about what they would like the student to do when she is in Form 5 the parents said that they wish that their student goes to ETC. So I recommended that the student continues to work on the computer so that she will find a good job in the future.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
- In what kind of activities are they encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
 - Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

She is very much encouraged and involved in school activities. But she is not involved in community activities. She used to go to the MUSEUM but now she does not go there anymore. I think that it is good for her to participate in the community life

Church School Boys M

Interview with Head Teacher

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the student's life?

What the school does is provide a good education for the students. We include them in every academic prospect, and try to give each student a sound education.

In the school we have a student with a disability, who is in Form 4. Together with his facilitator, we have come to the conclusion that it would be best for him if he tried to take four subjects for the O' Levels and sit for them over two years. Most probably, should he pass the O' Levels, they would be his best asset for prospective employment. On a social level he is very well accepted, included and aided by his peers.

At school we do not prepare the students for specific work-related skills.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITP) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the student's life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

The students with disabilities have an IEP/ITP prepared by the facilitators, as soon as they enter the school. In past years, when students did not have a facilitator, they were excused in cases where they did not do their homework. The teachers aided such students. We have a Form 4 student who has only had a facilitator since he was in form 3. Thus the

IEP/ITP started from there. Then there are students who have had a facilitator since their Primary school years. We also have a student who has a walking problem, whose parents do not want him to have a facilitator. He was doing very badly in school and in fact he was kept a repeater in the same form, with the parents consent. This student has just finished taking his exams at this point in time. We will now see how he has done in these exams. If he still has done badly, I will personally insist that the student has a facilitator.

I think that in the past years, students with disabilities were not much aided. Since the system of the facilitators and peripatetic teachers was introduced, there has been a great, positive difference in the schools.

Both academic and social aspects are taken into consideration. The students participate in school activities and outings. Parents are hesitant about sending their students on school outings. But since the school provides the necessary transport, they accept. Students with disabilities go with their peers on outings to the cinema, the swimming pool as well as restaurants. The school policy is to have each and every student involved in school activities.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

In general meetings, the whole staff is involved, including the teachers, the facilitator and me. But with regards to the IEP/ITP it is only the facilitator, the peripatetic and I who are involved. I, as a Head teacher, am involved in individual meetings with the facilitator and also with the peripatetic teacher. They keep me informed about the students' progress. I nevertheless leave the work in the hands of the facilitators and may occasionally act as a liaison between the facilitators and the teachers in cases of revision purposes.

When a student with a disability is about to enter our school, I make it a point that the student is presented to the teachers before they have him in their class. This is very important, because having a student with a disability in class is a new experience for many teachers. On the whole, teachers are very co-operative. Even the parents are so. In the past, we would have had many complaints with the parents, who regarded students with disabilities as a hindrance to the other students' learning.

It is very early to speak about changes which may take place in the IEP/ITP team, since we have only had the facilitators for the past six months and they have not changed since then.

There is also another young adult with disability who comes from another school. He does some work in the office, and he is thus exposed to different experiences of work. But it is very difficult for the boy to cope with the work, since he does not have someone to coach him. I think that there is a great need to invest in training people to coach people with disabilities at work.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
- Are the student's wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the student's wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

The students' wishes are taken very much into consideration. I can speak, for instance, about a student who is in Form 3. The facilitator does not sit next to him in class and it is not the facilitator who helps him to climb the stairs – his peers help him. This is done in order for the facilitator not to embarrass the student. Moreover, the student wanted very much to take Italian as one of his subject option. The school thought that Italian would be a difficult subject for him to study. But since he wanted to learn it so badly, we granted his wish. He is much helped in the learning of the subject, especially through the use of Italian Programmes on the television.

Moreover, we encourage the students to participate in extra curricular activities, which are organised by the school. However it is always up to the students to decide whether to participate or not. Voluntary options are better than forced ones.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP Planner?

- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
- Is it formal or informal contact?
- What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
- Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

We have regular, individual contacts with the parents. Two parents' days are organised every year. Moreover during the month of November the school also organises meetings for the parents of the students in each Form – for example we meet the parents of the third formers on one day and the parents of the fourth formers on another day. During these meetings, we talk about the subjects and skills which the students of a particular year are doing learning.

Contacts with regards to the IEP/ITP are also made with parents of students with disabilities. The parents are kept regularly informed about what is happening in the students' life at school. Meetings do not necessarily involve the facilitator, the parents and me at the same time. I might meet with the parents alone, and the facilitator might meet with the parents alone. Information is then passed on to the different members.

There are no clashes with the parents, except of course in the case of that student, where his parents do not want him to have a facilitator. In case of problems the parents are of course contacted.

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contact is there?

The guidance teachers organise work-related visits for each and every student in the school. The prospects of work for students with disabilities are not yet known. However I hope that with the sound education with which they are provided at school will lead them on to further studies.

We have few contacts with agencies of work. A person from the ETC has come to talk to the students. This is the only contact we have had.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are the encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

The school encourages the students with disabilities to form part of organisations in the community. The students may be members of the MUSEUM or of other organisations, according to their preferences and likes.

Church School N

Interview with Facilitator

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disabilities for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the student's life?

At school the boy I am facilitator to, gets academic preparation. He attends the Programme at The Eden Foundation and it is thus there, where the student is prepared with regards to vocational training.

In Form 3 the facilitator from The Eden Foundation, the psychologist and the school decided that subjects which are abstract for him would be dropped. Physics was in fact dropped. Accounts, which is also quite difficult for him was however a subject which he wanted to take. He did not do very well in the subject during the first year in which he took it. As for this year, the examination results are not yet known, so we'll see to the matter when the results are actually published. In Italian he is so good and able that he always comes first in Form each year. He is also very good at using the computer especially the power point Programme and he is fluent at typing. He has difficulties when it comes to PE lessons, because he has problems with certain movements. However he likes racing, doing exercises using the gym's equipment and swimming. But he dislikes football and basketball.

2. Are Individual Education Programmes (IEP/ITP) or similar Programmes planned with regards to students with disabilities?
 - When do the IEP/ITPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the student's life are taken into consideration in the IEP/ITP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

At school he does not have an IEP/ITP planned for him. He attends The Eden Foundation's Programme, and there they work out the IEP/ITP for him. However the school is very flexible even when it comes to exams.

Moreover, through contact with the parents I know what the facilitator at The Eden Foundation is doing and thus I try to reinforce what the student learns at the Eden Programme by working on the development of the same skills, at school. The student is thus not confused.

The boy's peers were prepared in advance about his coming to the school. I saw to the matter myself. It took them more or less a month till they became accustomed to the idea of having the boy in their class. It was also the first experience for the school – that of having a boy with a disability. But there was no problem with regards to his inclusion at school.

I think that having a facilitator at school has helped him a lot. I say this because I have another boy with a disability, attending this same school, in mind. This other boy came from another mainstream school where he had many problems of bullying and from where the school community did not accept him. When he applied to attend our school, the parents were told that he could not apply, since the school could not provide a facilitator for him. To cut a long story short, the parents insisted that he could cope without a facilitator as long as he could enter the school (and leave the other). I dare say that not having a facilitator, has had a direct negative influence on his academic learning as well as on his social relationships. He does very poorly in all the subjects and he does not have any friends. I think that it is very unfortunate for him not to have a facilitator to help him in developing many important skills for immediate and future use.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP/ITP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP/ITP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

The Eden Foundation formally contacts me - as the boy's facilitator, once a year. Here the boy's progress is discussed and the objectives for the coming year are set. The Eden Foundation reviews the IEP/ITP every six months. The psychologist, the speech therapist and other professionals, as well as the parents and I assist this meeting, and we consider various life aspects of the student's life to include in the IEP/ITP.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their IEP/ITP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

I think that his wishes are considered by the facilitator of The Eden Foundation. The boy for instance is very able with the use of the computer. He thus have computer lessons at school, which the Eden have included as part of the IEP/ITP.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP/ITP Planner?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
 - Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?

- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

Yes regular contact with the parents is kept. However since I do not prepare the IEP/ITP, the parents consult the facilitator at The Eden Foundation in case of problems.

6. Do the IEP/ITPs include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact take place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with Employment agencies? If so, what kind of contact is there?

As I told you, the boy is very able with the computer. The Eden aim at training the boy in office work in the near future. At school he thus takes computer lessons, while at the Eden Programme, he has training in paper work. The Eden are thus exploiting the student's ability with the computer for the boy's well-being in his future.

7. Are students with disabilities encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are they encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the school?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

At school, he is very eager to participate in events such as the school concerts, quizzes, projects and the likes. Last year, for example, he was encouraged by the Eden to work on some work on the computer in advance of the President's visit to The Eden Foundation. He was also the one invited to speak to the President during the same visit. During the same year he was also encouraged to do a speech during one of the school's events. He finds no problem whatsoever with participation in any kind of activity. The boy needs little encouragement since he is so eager to be involved in activities happening around him. At his home town he is a member of the MUSEUM community.

Schools Code

Schools	Code
Special School	A
Special School	B
Special School	C
Special School	D
State Mainstream Boys Junior Lyceum	E
State Mainstream Boys Junior Lyceum	F
State Mainstream Girls Junior Lyceum	G
State Mainstream Girls Junior Lyceum	H
State Mainstream Boys Secondary School	I
State Mainstream Boys Secondary School	J
State Mainstream Girls Secondary School	K
State Mainstream Girls Secondary School	L
Boys Church School	M
Boys Church School	N
Girls Church School	O
Girls Church School	P

Appendix D

Interview Questions For Transition Co-Ordinator Of Special Schools

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disability for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the student's life?

2. Are Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or similar programs planned with regards to students with disability?
 - When do the IEPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP planner?
 - Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP team?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How often does this happen?

4. What opportunity is given to students with disability to take part in their IEP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects

- Other aspects?
5. Are the parents involved in the IEP?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
 - Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?
 6. Do the IEPs include contact with the world of work?
 - At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
 - Are the students taken on job sites?
 - Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?
 7. Are students with disability encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
 - In what kind of activities are the encouraged to be involved (sports, academic and other leisure activities)?
 - Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the schools?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Interview With The Transition Co-Ordinator Of Special Schools

1. What kind of preparation is given to students with disability for them to be aided in their transition from the school to employment?
 - When does this preparation take place (age of student)?
 - Does this preparation start early or late in the student's life?

The transition program starts about one and a half year to two years before the students finish school and it is carried out in special schools only. Before the transition program starts, the students are assessed on their life skills. Teachers do not cater for such skills in the IEP and this is left in my hands. So, during the transition programs my aims are to promote social skills and to try to make the students aware of the world of work.

After the assessment takes place, I contact the care workers and another assessment is carried out where other information about the student is gathered. During these contacts, we seek to find information about the communication skills, which the persons possess, what they like to do and whether they are able to eat on their own. A list of services, which the persons use, is also sought during the meetings. All the information collected is put into a profile which is then given to the care workers who will be assisting the students.

A case-conference is then held where the student, the transition co-ordinator, the teacher, the parents, the care worker and other persons meet to talk about the students. Afterwards, the care worker starts to visit the students at school and observes them while at work. Gradually, the students start to go to the Adult Training Centre until they start to attend the centre on a full day basis. The transition is planned very carefully. In fact, I think that it would be ideal if students started to attend Adult Training Centres during the summer holidays. During the summer the centres are open till noon and so the students would be more able to get familiar with the place in a gradual way.

On the other hand, transition programs do not always lead students to the Adult Training Centres. Persons with disability who are seen as being 'able' are referred to The Eden Foundation. Although The Eden Foundation faces various problems, their work is undoubtedly valuable.

2. Are Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or similar programs planned with regards to students with disability?
 - When do the IEPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students' life are taken into consideration in the IEP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Instances where persons with disability find a job from the Adult Training Centres are rare. In the past, the Adult Training Centre were supposed to train persons into finding employment but today the centres act more as Day Care Centres. There are persons in the Adult Training Centres who are able to work and I ask why these persons aren't given the opportunity to find a job.

I work more on the Individual Transition Programme (ITP). A section in the IEP is dedicated to the transition to work. The ITP includes life skills such as teaching the students to write their own name, read toilet signs, know how to use traffic signs, recognise numbers, to handle money and other such skills. During the transition program the cognitive skills learnt in contexts. Teachers are responsible for the IEP. Creative work is also given importance as in the Adult Training Centres emphasis is put on the making of such work.

3. Who are the persons participating in the IEP planner?
 - Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP team?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How often does this happen?

I work with teachers and classroom assistants who are responsible for the students and the assessment is carried out together with them. Teachers and classrooms assistants are very

helpful and they are involved in this process as they are the persons who take care of the students at school and so they know the students very well. The teachers are familiar with the students, where they know the students from the educational aspect, while the classroom assistants know the students on a personal aspect.

The parents are also involved in the profile, as they are important contributors to the students' life. I also speak to the heads of schools who can give me other information about the student. Moreover, I meet these persons during separate meetings because sometimes there are instances when these members would not like to speak in front of others and thus, they talk with me, alone. A meeting for all the parents is held before the transition programme actually starts. This meeting is very essential, as the parents may ask questions, which in most instances are common to all the parents. There is one thing that I wish to carry out in the future. I would like to I organise sessions where the students and their families meet to discuss how the students' future can be built. The family is a very important element in the planning and when everyone is involved, the members of the family feel that they can contribute something to the future life of the students. Parents can speak privately to me whenever they feel the need.

4. What opportunity is given to students with disability to take part in their IEP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

The students' participation depends on their abilities. If the students are able to talk and to express their wishes, they are asked to participate. For instance at the moment I am remembering of a girl who didn't want to go to The Eden Foundation since she didn't want to find a job. She wanted to learn knitting and so she wanted to go to the Adult Training Centre. In fact the first time she went to the Adult Training Centre, the care workers prepared the knitting needles and once she started to knit she didn't want to leave the centre. I try to act upon the students' wishes and if a particular person wants to do

gardening, I will do my best to make their dreams come true. Moreover, there are times when the students' wishes were far fetched or when their parents may not trust them.

5. Are the parents involved in the IEP?

- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
- Is it formal or informal contact?
- What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about what happens in the students' school?
- Are they consulted about the curriculum and especially how it can be made to suit the students' needs?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

During meetings and case conferences, the wishes and the aims of the parents are taken into consideration. Despite consultation with parents takes place, the Adult Training Centre takes ultimate decisions. On the other hand, parents may suggest what they would like their students to learn, so that care workers at the centre can teach them the desired skill. When I work jointly with parents, I feel that this is an advantage, as parents know the students better. Consequently, they can co-operate with me by reinforcing the skills at home.

6. Do the IEPs include contact with the world of work?

- At what point in time does this contact taken place (early or late in relation to the student's school leaving date)?
- Are the students taken on job sites?
- Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?

During the Individual Transition Programme, I try to make the students familiar with the world of work. In fact, I organise visits to work sites through which students can learn about different work sites. At the moment, I am taking students to Local Councils where students get to know about the different environments, while the employees can become aware of persons with disability. Moreover, I also work with students where I teach them to understand work-related issues. Issues such as that at the work place everyone is supervised and that they must follow the rules prescribed by others, are taught. This is a very important issue and students should be aware of such issues. If the students go to the Adult Training Centre they should know that they must follow rules.

Training in the community is very important and I am also planning that in the future students will have a vocational assessment, where afterwards the students can be sent to short work training sessions in the community. At the moment, the persons who are in contact with the world of work are those following The Eden Foundation programs. Moreover, I contact the ETC, where a register for persons with disability is compiled.

7. Are students with disability encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
- In what kind of activities are they encouraged to be involved (sports, academic and other leisure activities)?
 - Are students encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organised by the schools?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Sometimes leisure activities in the community cause problems, since schools host students coming from different localities. I think that what can be done is that schools contact organisations within community where the school is situated.

Appendix E

Interview Questions For The Eden Foundation

1. Can you give us some information as to how The Eden Foundation started to operate with regards to the vocational training of persons with disabilities?
 - In the process of designing the transition plans, were you influenced by other transition programs?
 - What are the aims behind the development of the transition programs used by The Eden Foundation?

2. When do you think that the transition planning should start?
 - With regards to The Eden Foundation, how old are the students when they start their transition?
 - What happens when the students leave secondary school?

3. Are Individual Education Programs (IEP) or similar programs planned with regards to students with disability?
 - When do the IEPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students life are taken into consideration in the IEP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

4. Who are the persons participating in the IEP planner?
 - Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP team?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How often does this happen?

5. What opportunity is given to students with disability to take part in their IEP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

6. Are the parents involved in the IEP?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about what happens while the students are following the program?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

7. Do you think that schools are providing vocational training for students with disabilities?
 - Does The Eden Foundation have any contacts with schools?
 - What type of contacts do you have?
 - From which area schools do young adults attending The Eden Foundation transition program come from? (special schools, area secondary schools)
 - Does The Eden Foundation find the schools 'co-operative'?

8. How does The Eden Foundation promote employment for persons with disabilities?

- Do you contact employers?
 - How are employers contacted?
 - Are there any contacts with employment agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?
 - Are there opportunities for persons with disabilities to enter employment?
 - What kind of contacts are made in order to create a positive attitude between the employers and the employees?
9. What kind of vocational training does The Eden Foundation give to people with disabilities?
- Does the preparation include on-the-job training?
 - What happens when persons with disabilities find a job?
 - Does this preparation end as soon as the persons find a job?
 - Does The Eden Foundation provide counselling and / or support to persons with disabilities who work?
10. In what kind of work do persons with severe disability engage?
- Does The Eden Foundation have any programs, which cater for persons with severe disability?
11. Are students with disability encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?
- In what kind of activities are the encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
 - Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Interview at The Eden Foundation

(Note: Three visits were carried out at The Eden Foundation. During one of the visits the authors interviewed a member of a transition team. During another visit the authors spoke with a job developer. The other interview concerned a job coach. The interviews were compiled in one interview, which is shown below and in the following pages. The name persons answering the question are written next to their response.)

1. Can you give us some information as to how The Eden Foundation started to operate with regards to the vocational training of persons with disabilities?
 - In the process of designing the transition plans, where you influenced by other transition programs?
 - What are the aims behind the development of the transition programs used by The Eden Foundation?

Member of a transition team: The ideology behind the transition program, which the Eden Foundation is using, comes from the USA. There, the educational system is very different from the educational system in Malta. In the USA the transition programs from school to work for persons with disabilities form part of the school syllabus. There, transition planning is more of an ideology than anything else. For the Americans transition programs are very important since they lead to independence – being mobile at home, and in the community. Moreover the USA has more advanced transition programs than we have here in Malta. At Eden we believe that an adaptation of USA's transition programs must take place.

2. When do you think that the transition planning should start?
 - With regards to The Eden Foundation, how old are the students when they start their transition?
 - What happens when the students leave *secondary* school?

Member of a transition team: When children become fourteen-year olds, apart from their IEP, they also have a transition program planned for them. They are exposed gradually to open employment. As a member of the transition team, I believe that it is very important for people with disabilities to be exposed to open employment. On-the-job

training is thus a vital element in the transition process, since generalisation does not take place for people with disabilities.

The transition starts when the students are 14 years old and continues till they are 18. In fact by the time they are 18 years old, they will have finished the program. Moreover, when they reach 16, the young adults start to register for work with the ETC. The Eden Foundation has an agreement with the ETC, where the ETC subsidises 60 % of the expenses of the program, which the Eden offers for young adults who are from 16 years over.

The preparation for employment is organized in two programs. In one program, the students are sixteen year olds, and the other program which is a follow up of the other, caters for the students who are eighteen/nineteen plus. The latter program continues until the students find a job.

The program where students of age sixteen to eighteen attend, consists of a transition program from school to work. The teacher helps the students in academic subjects. So there has to be a link between what happens at school and what happens in the program so that the students will be prepared to use the skills for work. For instance writing and computer skills are two aspects which can help students to find a job in an office, as data input clerks. The teacher is there to start giving the knowledge and the skills and then the work is transferred in terms of the world of work, by the transition program. Most students who attend the transition program at Eden Foundation come from special school and there they wouldn't have enough training. Therefore the students have to be trained in number recognition, reading the clock, basic addition so that they will be able to learn practical life skills. Life skills are very crucial for an independent life. The IEP is specifically done for every person and we see to what extent the person can be independent so that we can work on it. Students with disability have to be helped during each step of their transition.

We teach various skills such as grooming, domestic skills and others. We have a flat and the students are train in there. Sometimes the students have to cook. They thus have to go shopping for the necessary things first. The students will then write the recipe, given that they are able to write. For those who are not able to write, we have to find a technique to make them learn. They may learn things by memory. Communication skills are crucial to

this program and whenever this proves to be difficult, a speech therapist helps the students. One has to have enough time in teaching basic skills like the value of money, reading the clock and also social skills.

Sessions on sexuality are also carried out. Students will learn what is private and what is public. Persons with disabilities have their feelings and they have to know how to express them. There are cases when the students are able to make friends. Some persons who have a mild disability may also get married.

During the programs, the students start to learn vocational skills such as the way they should speak to employers. By the time that they are seventeen years old, students start to visit work sites.

The other program, which is a follow-up of the transition program from school to work, focuses on work. This program helps the students in becoming independent, where they learn skill such as catching buses. The parents start to trust the students, and this fact makes the students very proud of themselves. The teacher's role during this program starts to fade out. The students are engaged in experience on work sites once a week, whilst they are sixteen to eighteen year olds. But during this program, the persons with disabilities have on-the-job experience twice and once three times a week. The program lasts until the persons with disabilities find work. Once work is found, a job coach assists the persons with disabilities and then fades out slowly. Follow-on assistance for persons who are already engaged in employment is provided a swell.

3. Are Individual Education Programs (IEP) or similar programs planned with regards to students with disability?

- When do the IEPs start to take place?
- Which aspects of the students life are taken into consideration in the IEP

Academic aspects

- Personal and social development aspects
- Vocational aspects
- Other aspects?

Member of a transition team: The IEP starts as soon as the persons start attending Eden's transition programs. When they enter here they are assessed. The IEP includes all the aspects and this depends on the person. But mainly academic skills, speech therapy, physiotherapy and others are included in the program. At age fourteen the students start to learn skills involved with employment, such as sequencing. This is a long process and each step is important because it is like a chain. The Eden Foundation holds an IEP review every 6 months. This is a formal review, concerning the teachers, professionals, the parents and the students. Informal contacts with the parents are held almost everyday.

There are contacts with other agencies such as the ETC. Persons with disabilities register for work like other people do and they do so in a register specific for persons with disabilities. This includes persons having all types of disabilities. An agreement was made with the ETC (since 1998 -1999) where the ETC sponsors 60% of the funds, during on-the-job training and then the rest is paid through charity. The Eden Foundation is responsible for job finding, job coaching and other services.

4. Who are the persons participating in the IEP planner?

- Can you name the members?
- With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
- Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
- Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP team?
- Why does this happen?
- How often does this happen?

Member of a transition team: The members of the IEP vary according to each person with disability' needs. The members usually include the psychologist, physiotherapist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, facilitator, parents, the students and their friends. Professionals do a clinical assessment first. The members can then start to plan the program according, basing the goals on the students' needs and abilities.

There are goals dedicated to the learning of life skills and others related to work experience - in the Eden employment co-operative. When we get to know the students better, we try to involve them in youth centres. A review of the IEP is held every six months. During the

review the progress of the students is discussed. Each member sets goals for the following six months.

Change in the team members happens occasionally, when a member leaves the team. In such cases we engage the person with disability in a kind of transition through which the student can assist to a transfer from the previous member to the new member. The IEP has a checklist for every item, which is to be learned by the students. A summary of the IEP is then made in order to be comprehensive by the parents.

5. What opportunity is given to students with disability to take part in their IEP planner?
 - Are the students' wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the students' wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

Member of a transition team: Students have says in the IEP. It is good to know the students' likes and dislikes. The aims and goals of the IEP are based on what the students need to learn, while teaching is carried out in ways found to be enjoyable by the students. It is important to get to know the persons, before the planning starts.

The people with disabilities are asked to say what they wish to be included in their IEP. They are thus included in the decision making process. This is a crucial element of the whole process, since even the parents can come to realise that the students are growing up. What happens most often is that the parents regard the students as babyish and they think that the students can never manage to become employed. This is one of the reasons why the persons with disabilities's say in their IEP is very important.

6. Are the parents involved in the IEP?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?

- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about what happens while the students are following the program?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?
- Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

Member of a transition team: Before the IEP is planned, the parents are consulted. They say what skills they would like their children to achieve. It is also of major importance that what the students work on, during the program, is reinforced at home. We thus keep regular and frequent contact with the parents. This is very important, especially here in Malta where family ties are very important. After all the parents know the students' best.

In reviews the parents are very much involved since the parents will be doing the reinforcement of much of the skills, which are set as goals. For instance we encourage the parents to allow their students to make the tea. Students should continue doing the same things at home in order for them to become independent. Each member in the IEP sets his/her goals and in case of disagreement the goals are discussed.

Continuous contacts with parents are made for instance once a week. Formal meetings are held every six months. When we need to speak to them we contact them by telephone.

7. Do you think that schools are providing vocational training for students with disabilities?
- Does The Eden Foundation have any contacts with schools?
 - What type of contacts do you have?
 - From which area schools do young adults attending The Eden Foundation transition program come from? (special schools, area secondary schools)

- Does The Eden Foundation find the schools co-operative?

Member of a transition team: We have students coming from mainstream schools and others coming from special schools, who participate in the transition program. The majority of our clients come from special schools. We keep in contact with the Head teachers, the teachers and the facilitators of the students' schools and we try to work hand in hand. It is very important for persons with disabilities and their parents to have this bridge between Eden and the schools. Until now we have always experienced great co-operation from schools. Moreover, nowadays people's mentality is changing.

8. How does the Eden Foundation promote employment for persons with disabilities?

- Do you contact employers?
- How are employers contacted?
- Are there any contacts with Employment Agencies? If so, what kind of contacts is there?
- Are there opportunities for persons with disabilities to enter employment?
- What kind of contacts is made in order to create a positive attitude between the employers and the employees?

Member of a transition team: It does not often happen that employers contact Eden to ask for the employment of persons with disabilities. What happens is that a job developer searches for jobs. At the moment we have managed to transition about 60 people to different jobs. To continue with what I was saying, when a job comes up, the match-making phase takes place. We try to see who is the person to be most fit for the job. We also check what the employer is expecting of the prospective employee and see whether a person has the necessary abilities to match the employer's expectations. However we do not let the ideal get in the way. We do try to work out a compromise with the employer. The fact that there is a follow-up, a sort of backing system, is very attractive to employers. This is so, since employers know that should there be a problem, they can always refer to the job coach. I dare say that employers are very happy with our service and more importantly with the disabled employees themselves.

Job developer: The job developer is another co-ordinator who is responsible for searching jobs, carrying out initial training and support. Jobs for persons with physical

disabilities are easier to find than for persons with mental disability. Employers are afraid of recruiting persons with mental disability because they confuse persons with mental disability with mentally sickness. So this is a very difficult task for the job developer. Employers are not ready to employ persons with mental disability. The Eden Foundation tries to convince employers in recruiting employees with disability, by giving them examples of other persons with mental disability who are working satisfactorily.

At first, employers are contacted by telephone. We find that is better that the job developer contacts employers by telephone rather than by sending a letter. A meeting is arranged with the one at the top of the hierarchy. During the meeting the job developer explains the system of recruiting employees with disability and reassures the employers. Sometimes, in certain places the job developer finds that the work is not suitable for persons with disabilities. Such places include work sites, where many chemicals are used.

Afterwards, a second meeting takes place where this time the job developer looks around the place and checks whether the machinery or work matches to the person with disability. During the third meeting, the job developer has to be careful and diplomatic in trying to convince the employer to carry out certain adjustments to the physical environment. Employers have to show willingness to the adjustments. The person with disability is then taken to the work place and is asked to give his opinion about it. The majority of persons with disabilities give positive feedback.

At this point, transport is also taken into consideration. It is very important that the employers provide transport. Before starting to work, a meeting takes place between the job coach, the fellow workers and the supervisors who are going to work with the person with disability. It is very important that the peer workers feel included.

9. What kind of vocational training does The Eden Foundation give to people with disabilities?

- Does the preparation include on-the-job training?
- What happens when persons with disabilities find a job?
- Does this preparation end as soon as the person finds a job?
- Does The Eden Foundation provide counselling and / or support to persons with disabilities who work?

Member of transition team: The general aim for which the Ability Centre works for, is not to train people with disabilities solely for specific jobs, but to train them to achieve a better quality of life. Of course, open employment is not ideal for each and every person. There are groups of people who might need support only during the beginning of their employment, there are those who will always need assistance and those with mild disabilities who could cope. In the process of transition planning, it is important to identify each person's abilities and to reflect these in the aims of the planning.

The co-operative of The Eden Foundation brings work for the persons with disabilities to work on. Gradually, the persons are taken out in the work place. Therefore the work for which they are most suited for is found. A lot of importance is given to computer training, especially since most of the clients are illiterate.'

Training proves to be very important, especially when some students do not know how to do basic skills, like answering the phone. Parents protect their children and don't let them to do these things at home. Unfortunately the majority of students don't know how to read and write. They have limited literacy skills. Thus, this affects the kind of job, which they will be going to work on, even if this post is in a factory. Social skills are also limited because there are students who are unable to read the time.

After training takes place, sessions of work training takes place. Training lasts for 3 months and during this time groups of 3 students and an instructor go to the work site, 2 or 3 times a week and there they spend a full day. This helps the students in gaining work experience. Students will also get an idea of what a typical day at work is like, where first of all they have to wake up early and then they have to get used to certain routines like going to the toilet, to the canteen and so on. On-the-job training is very useful and after spending 3 months in a factory, students may spend other 3 months at another work site such as in an office. So the students get general ideas about different types of jobs.

The wishes of the students, their abilities, skills, behaviour and manual dexterity are taken into consideration. At this time, the students are not paid a full wage but employees give donations. Moreover, employers are encouraged to recruit some employees on their work place. Training is continued until a job is found. It is an on-going procedure. Once a job is

found, it is important that students are suitable in order to do the job, and that the job is fit for them. Thus, one has to be sure that job matching takes place.

In general, there are more successes than failures. Failures may happen when changes at the work place happen as for instance changes in hierarchy or managerial staff or changes in work settings.

Job coach: When work starts, a job coach from the Eden Foundation visits the work place and sometimes he works there for a week before starting to train the person. The job coach assists the person with disability on the work site and helps the person in gaining social skills; and in getting used to transport routines and work skills. The job coach stays with the trainee with disability for three months, starting by staying with the persons all the time and then fading slowly away. The job coach starts doing the fading out by leaving the person alone for two hours (staying in the building) until complete fading out happens. When a problem occurs, the coach starts to assist the person again.

Follow on-support is made available, where the job coach pays short visits to speak with the employer and with the person with disability. Therefore employers know that they can contact the job coach if problems arise. There are times, where some persons might need more support than others. It is also important that whenever problems arise, the job coach tackles it immediately, since employers will appreciate this.

Member of transition team: Emotional support is also provided all along, during the training. This takes place in the evenings and in a group setting. We have cases of people with disabilities who become really frustrated because of the family environment, where they experience independence at work but are deprived from independence at home. In fact, in the near future, we hope to start providing a service of supported living. We plan to have apartments in the community each accommodating up to three persons with disabilities in it. However up till now we did not have any funding with regards to this project. Hopefully, this project will come into being in the near future.

10. In what kind of work do persons with severe disability engage?

- Does The Eden Foundation have any programs, which cater for persons with severe disability?

Member of transition team: There are persons with disabilities who may never be able to become fully independent. This is why Eden wishes to develop a program for people with disabilities that have the ability, but that their disability hinders them from becoming independent, as in the case of people with cerebral palsy. We, at Eden wish to have them involved in activities, where for instance in groups of three they could go shopping and could cook with the necessary support. What we have in mind is to stimulate the ability of these people, not necessarily exposing them to work. An alternative would thus be found, where the aims of the activities mentioned before would reflect the abilities of persons with disabilities.

11. Are students with disability encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are they encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

The general aims of the Ability Centre are to achieve educational attainment as well as integration in the community. In fact after we come to know a youth better, we try to find organisations within the community, like youth centres, where these youths could become members. We transition them into these community organisations, and then fade out gradually.

We also encourage them to become members of Youth Centres and we go with them during the first visits. Then we fade out slowly and we keep regular contact with them to see how they are doing. Students are also taught how to make friends, especially when the parents are overprotective.

At The Eden Foundation, there is a gym, where the students can spend their free time. They are also encouraged to participate in sports activities, and we are now contacting The Park of Friendship in order to train some students for the Special Olympics. I do not agree that the community sets up organisations for disabled persons only. Persons with disabilities should be included in community organisations such as in youth centres, where integration with other people can happen.

Appendix F

Chart Of Eden Employment

Chart 4.1 – The list of persons with disability who have become employed through The Eden Foundation

	Employer	Job Title	Employed	Full/Part Time
1	Playmobil	Assembly Operator	18/10/93	Full
2	Suncrest Hotel	Stores Assistant	22/10/93	Full
3	Institute of Health Care	Clerk	03/01/94	Full
4	J P Advertising	Office Junior	26/01/94	Part
5	Denim Services Ltd.	Machine Operator	07/02/94	Full
6	Dowty Ltd.	Inspector	22/03/94	Full
7	Express Aluminium	Work Shop Assistant	04/08/94	Full
8	Toly Products	Machine Operator	29/08/94	Full
9	Prominent Group of Co.	Assembly Operator	03/10/94	Full
10	Dedicated Micros	PCB Finisher	02/11/94	Full
11	International Membranes	Product Finisher	14/11/94	Full
12	P.Cutajar & Co.	Warehouse Assistant	06/02/95	Full
13	McNeill Ltd.	Hand Operator	29/05/95	Full
14	Playmobil	Assembly Operator	29/05/95	Full
15	Coastline Hotel	Assistant Gardener	03/07/95	Full
16	S T (SGS)	Stores Assistant	03/07/95	Full
17	Playmobil	Machine Operator	04/09/95	Full
18	Zurrieq Day Centre Elderly	Auxiliary	02/10/95	Part
19	McDonald's	Assistant/Stores	22/11/95	Part
20	Toly Products	Machine Operator	26/02/96	Full
21	V.F.Malta Ltd.	Machine Operator	13/05/96	Full
22	Central Bank	Library Assistant	01/07/96	Part
23	Malta Freeport	Office Junior	02/09/96	Full
24	Malta Freeport	Office Junior	02/09/96	Full
25	Malta Freeport	Canteen Assistant	02/09/96	Full
26	Westin Dragonara Hotel	Linen Room Assistant	29/04/97	Full
27	L-Imgarr Hotel Gozo	Kitchen Assistant	30/05/97	Part
28	S T (SGS)	Assembly Operator	23/06/97	Full
29	J. B. Stores	Packer	27/10/97	Full
30	Old Priory Nursery School	Teacher Assistant	10/11/97	Part
31	Corinthia San Gorg Hotel	Office Junior	24/11/97	Part
32	Air Malta	Messenger	09/12/97	Full
33	Biochemicals	Machine Operator	19/01/98	Full
34	I lal Mann	Cleaner	05/05/98	Full
35	St.James Hospital	Hospital Auxiliary	25/05/98	Full
36	Tower Bakery Gozo	Assistant	03/06/98	Part
37	Playmobil	Loader	13/06/98	Full
38	Sea Bank Hotel	Kitchen Porter	10/07/98	Part
39	Eden Coop.	Production Assistant	24/08/98	Part
40	Eden Coop.	Production Assistant	24/08/98	Part
41	Eden Coop.	Production Assistant	24/08/98	Part

42	Eden Coop.	Production Assistant	24/08/98	Part
43	M L R	Machine Operator	Nov-98	Full
44	Carlo Gavazzi	Assembly Operator	18/01/99	Full
45	Salvo Grima (freeport)	Office Junior	08/02/99	Part
46	Carlo Gavazzi	Assembly Operator	01/03/99	Full
47	P.B.S.	Messenger	05/04/99	Full
48	Air Malta	Clerk	03/05/99	Full
49	B. O. V.	Assistant Cashier	24/07/99	Full
50	HSBC	Coin Machine Operator	02/08/99	Full
51	SAS Radisson Hotel	Kitchen Porter	16/08/99	Full
52	Denim Services Ltd.	Labelling	31/01/00	Full
53	Carlo Gavazzi	Assembly Operator	13/03/00	Full
54	Terranet	Office Junior	18/04/00	Part
55	Germal	Assembly Operator	08/05/00	Full
56	Eden Coop.	General Duties	01/06/00	Part
57	Carlo Gavazzi	Assembly Operator	12/06/00	Full
58	University	Office Junior	19/06/00	Full
59	Enemalta	Office Junior	Jul-00	Part
60	Hermalock Malta Ltd.	Operator	09/10/00	Full
61	Baxter	Kitchen Helper	15/11/00	Full
62	Pharmamed	Operator	08/01/01	Full

Appendix G

Interview Questions For Dar Tal-Providenza

1. Can you give us some information as to how the Dar tal-Providenza started to operate with regards to the vocational training of persons with disabilities?
 - In the process of designing the transition plans, were you influenced by other transition programs?
 - What are the aims behind the development of the transition programs used by Dar tal-Providenza?

2. When do you think that the transition planning should start?
 - With regards to Dar tal-Providenza, how old is the student when s/he starts their transition?
 - What happens when the student leaves secondary school?

3. Are Individual Education Programs (IEP) or similar programs planned with regards to students with disability?
 - When do the IEPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the student's life are taken into consideration in the IEP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

4. Who are the persons participating in the IEP planner?
 - Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP team?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How often does this happen?

5. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their transition planning?
 - Are the student's wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the student's wishes taken into consideration?
 - What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and Social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects

6. Are their parents involved in the transition planning?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid their children when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

7. How does the Dar tal-Providenza promote employment for persons with disabilities?
 - Do you contact employers?
 - How are employers contacted?
 - Are there any contacts with Employment Agencies? If so, what kind of contacts are there ?
 - Are there opportunities for persons with disabilities to enter employment?
 - What kind of contacts are made in order to create a positive attitude between the employers and the employees?

8. What kind of vocational training does Dar tal-Providenza give to people with disabilities?

- Does the preparation include on-the-job training?
- What happens when a person with disabilities lands a job?
- Does this preparation end as soon as the person finds a job?
- Does Eden provide counselling and / or support to persons with disabilities who work?

9. In what kind of work do persons with severe disabilities engage?

- Does Eden have any program which cater for persons with severe disabilities?

10. What kind of vocational training does The Eden Foundation give to people with disability?

- Does the preparation include on-the-job training?
- What happens when persons with disability find a job?
- Does this preparation end as soon as the persons find a job?
- Does The Eden Foundation provide counselling and / or support to persons with disability who work?

11. Are students with disability encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are they encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

Interview at Dar Tal-Providenza

1. Can you give us some information as to how the Dar tal-Providenza started to operate with regards to the vocational training of persons with disabilities?

- In the process of designing the transition plans, were you influenced by other transition programs?
- What are the aims behind the development of the transition programs used by Dar tal-Providenza?

In this Dar tal-Providenza we have about 120 persons with disability, where 20 of them are experiencing the world of work. There are persons who are employed within the institution and there are others who work in various firms. Eight of them are working in a factory from half past 7 to half past 1 and they are assisted everyday by some one from here. There are persons who have a job coach with them, continuously. On the other hand, the persons who are working here are treated just the same like others and they have to wake up early and they are given time for a break. The persons who are employed in the factory do not work on a full-time basis and so they do not have a work permit. The Dar tal-Providenza has an agreement with the ETC and the persons are working in a factory instead of working in our buildings.

2. When do you think that the transition planning should start?

- With regards to Dar tal-Providenza, how old is the student when s/he start their transition?
- What happens when the student leaves secondary school?

The IEP depends on the intellectual ability of the person. What we do is that we try to match a job with the skills, which the person is able to perform. The teaching of numeracy and literacy also depends on the person's intellectual ability. Persons who are not intellectually able are taught basic practical skills such as reading signs and handling money for example they learn that LM5 has a greater value than LM2. Learning of such skills is planned in steps and an assessment is also carried out where we for every skills we mark if the person needed minimum assistance, medium assistance, full assistance or that he carried out the task independently.

3. Are Individual Education Programs (IEP) or similar programs planned with regards to students with disability?
 - When do the IEPs start to take place?
 - Which aspects of the students life are taken into consideration in the IEP
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects?

It is impossible to prepare everyone for work as this depends on the ability of the student and on the jobs available. It is difficult to find a job for persons with disability and we contact various firms and companies. In fact, we start to prepare a person to work when we are sure that a particular firm is ready to recruit someone and when the person shows that he would like to work in that post.

4. Who are the persons participating in the IEP planner?
 - Can you name the members?
 - With regards to what criteria are the members chosen?
 - Do the members meet to discuss any progress or recession? How often do they meet?
 - Do changes happen with regards to the members of the IEP team?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How often does this happen?

The team in the adaptation stage is made up of six persons who are assigned as ability promoters. We are responsible for the about 20 persons, where 8 of them are assigned to one person as they work in the same factory.

5. What opportunity is given to students with disabilities to take part in their transition planning?
 - Are the student's wishes and abilities taken into consideration?
 - To what extent are the student's wishes taken into consideration?

- What say (if any) do the students have in:
 - Academic aspects
 - Personal and Social development aspects
 - Vocational aspects
 - Other aspects

Their wishes are always taken into consideration. For example, John always wished to work outside these buildings and so when the employer told us about the job, we asked John if he would like to work there. When we assess persons with disability, we ask what they would like to do. Their wishes are taken into account. Then, when a job is found, we ask them whether they would like to do the job. Therefore, they are the ones who decide about the job and about which activities they would like to participate in.

6. Are their parents involved in the transition planning?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What is their level of involvement in the planning of reports, annual reviews etc?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid their children when these start to work?
 - Are decisions taken jointly with parents?

The parents of the persons are not involved directly in the transition process because some of them do not even come to see them and so sometimes the ability promoters do not feel that they must be included. On the other hand, there are other parents who come to visit their children twice a week. The ability promoters contact all the parents and they tell them about their children and about the work they will be working in. There were incidents where the

parents were over protective and so they didn't want their children to go to work. In these cases, their decisions were always taken into consideration.

7. How does the Dar tal-Providenza promote employment for persons with disabilities?

- Do you contact employers?
- How are employers contacted?
- Are there any contacts with Employment Agencies? If so, what kind of contacts are there ?
- Are there opportunities for persons with disabilities to enter employment?
- What kind of contacts are made in order to create a positive attitude between the employers and the employees?

There were 4 to 6 persons registering with the ETC but they never found a job. As an institution, we are at the end of the list. Persons who are already living in the community are at a more advantage than the persons who live here. We usually send letters and organise meetings with employers to explain what employing a person with disability is about. We also sent letters to the Local Council, to see whether they have any work for the persons here but unfortunately there was no reply.

8. What kind of vocational training does Dar tal-Providenza give to people with disabilities?

- Does the preparation include on-the-job training?
- What happens when a person with disabilities lands a job?
- Does this preparation end as soon as the person finds a job?
- Does Eden provide counselling and / or support to persons with disabilities who work?

Whenever a job is found, we meet and talk with the administration. The ETC is also involved in this process as it provides a training scheme, where the ETC pays an allowance for the first 3 months and then it starts to pay half the wage, while the employer pays the rest.

The social skills are learnt on the job site and so the person will become familiar with the work place. For instance, the person will learn where are the toilets situated. We cannot teach such

skills here although we can teach them how to read signs. The persons who work have social skills sessions, twice a week and they learn how to communicate with others and various other skills such as listening skills where they will learn how to listen to others. This program starts as soon as the person has got an opportunity for work. It is useless to prepare all the persons for work when they will not find a job because they will feel frustrated. For example, once we got a person who was going to be employed in a factory, she went for training and afterwards the employees didn't accept her. This person felt frustrated as she thought that she was going to start working.

9. In what kind of work do persons with severe disabilities engage?

- Does Eden have any program which cater for persons with severe disabilities?

The persons who do not work can spend their time in various workshops where they are given the chance to choose whatever they enjoy doing. Such workshops organise various activities such as music, gym and exercises classes, drama and craft.

10. What kind of vocational training does The Eden Foundation give to people with disability?

- Does the preparation include on-the-job training?
- What happens when persons with disability find a job?
- Does this preparation end as soon as the persons find a job?
- Does The Eden Foundation provide counselling and / or support to persons with disability who work?

Once, we confirmed the place, I as John's job coach went to see what this work entailed and if John could be able to carry out the task which would be assigned to him. I assisted John on his work place and after the first week together; I started to let him alone for a few hours until John was left to work on his own. Today, I do not go there but I phone in order to check how John is doing and if he is performing his job well. It is important that whenever preparation to work takes place, we involve the fellow workers. In John's example, I went to talk with his fellow workers and so they were also prepared in dealing with him. The buddy is important on

the work place as he can help the employee in case of having any difficulties and the person will know that he can turn on his buddy, when the coach is no longer present. For instance, another person has been working for one year and the job coach is still assisting the person. The person is being paid a full-wage and working for him has been positive. Whenever, the job coach tried to leave this person alone, there were problems and so the job coach had to stay there.

11. Are students with disability encouraged to participate in activities organised within the community?

- In what kind of activities are they encouraged to be involved (sports, academic or leisure activities)?
- Are there any contacts with Local Councils?

A lot of recreational activities are organised here. The adaptation stage focuses on an independent life where the persons can live in the community for example some may attend the MUSEUM or the scouts. But there is another problem because we don't have any volunteers who may act as buddies and who take the persons with them.

Appendix H

Interview Questions for the Employment Training Corporation

1. The ETC has a section dedicated to Persons with Disability. Can you give us some information about how it started to operate?
 - What kind of work does this section do?

2. What do you understand by the term “transition”?
 - What are the elements, which lead to a successful transition?
 - When do you think that transition planning should start?

3. Does the ETC provide vocational training for people with disability?
 - What kind of training do persons with disability engage in?
 - Does the preparation include on-the-job training?
 - What happens when a person with disabilities lands a job?
 - Does this preparation end as soon as the person finds a job?

4. Does the ETC provide any schemes or support to facilitate employment?
 - Can you give us some information about these schemes?

5. One of the functions of ETC is that of assessing the abilities of people registering for work. Is this also the case for persons with disability?
 - What kind of assessment takes place?
 - Can you give some information about this assessment?

6. Do you think that schools are providing vocational training for students with disability?
 - Do you work with schools at secondary level with regards to vocational training and counselling for students with disability?

7. Are their parents involved in the transition planning?
 - How would you describe the contact with the parents?
 - Is it formal or informal contact?
 - What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
 - Are they contacted in case of problems only?
 - Are the parents informed about how they can aid their students when these start to work?

8. How does the ETC promote employment for persons with disability?
 - Do you contact employers?
 - How are employers contacted?
 - Are there opportunities for persons with disability to enter employment?
 - What kind of contacts is made in order to create a positive attitude between the employers and the employees?

9. Do you think that discrimination against persons with disability happens?
 - What kind of discrimination takes place?
 - Why do you think this happens?
 - Does the ETC do something against the discrimination?

Interview at the ETC

1. The ETC has a section dedicated to Persons with Disability. Can you give us some information about how it started to operate?
 - What kind of work does this section do?

The ETC felt the need to start helping persons with disability in finding jobs. This idea came about in November of 1994. At that time, there was a unit, which was responsible for persons with disability who registered for work. In 1995, the ETC took over the register of persons with disability, who were registering for work.

2. What do you understand by the term “transition”?
 - What are the elements, which lead to a successful transition?
 - When do you think that transition planning should start?

Transition is the step, which one takes in order to enter in another environment. For transition to employment, for persons with disability, to be successful one must provide on the job-training. A job coach is the person who provides step by step training where the person with disability gets used to the environment and to the people in that environment. Persons with disability need academic training, social training and on-site the training, to be able to learn concrete skills. Therefore on the job training is very important as the job coach gradually trains the person with disability, into learning tasks at work.

The most essential element in the transition process is the process by which persons with disability are introduced to the work place. The Getting Through Program is based on the above mentioned element, where persons with disability are gradually introduced to the work place.

3. Does the ETC provide vocational training for people with disability?
 - What kind of training do persons with disability engage in?
 - Does the preparation include on-the-job training?

- What happens when a person with disabilities lands a job?
- Does this preparation end as soon as the person finds a job?

Training at the ETC may take place in two different ways. Training takes place in the ETC premises and may also take place at The Eden Foundation. The type of training, which is provided by the ETC is most suitable for persons with cognitive disability.

The *Getting through Program* is the course, which the ETC offers. The training focuses on three major areas, which are the literacy skills, the social skills and on-the-job training. The applied literacy includes simple mathematical skills such as using the ATM, using the calculator, reading signs which may be found in public places, and so on. On-the-job training is the most essential element in this program. Persons with disability are given experience on the work site, twice weekly. There, they have to obey the rules, such as being punctual, using a punch card, and other skills related to the job.

4. Does the ETC provide any schemes or support to facilitate employment?
 - Can you give us some information about these schemes?

The ETC offers two schemes, which are there to encourage the employers to recruit persons with disability. *Bridging the Gap*, which in the past was better known as the On-line scheme, consists of training persons with disability on the work place. So, persons with disability are trained for a short period of time, which may vary from a few weeks to one year. Here, the trainers can observe the ability of the trainee and the types of work that the persons with disability are able to carry out. The ETC provides job coaches who guide and helps the trainees. During the training phase, persons with disability do not get paid for their job, but they receive an allowance of LM30 per week. Persons with disability, who use this type of scheme, do not pay NI contributions. They are just working in order to be trained.

The *Employment Training Placement Scheme* (ETPS) is another scheme, which the ETC provides. Unfortunately, few employers opt for this scheme. This scheme is very similar to *Bridging the Gap* but, in this case the trainee is employed while he is given training. So, the

employees with disability pay the NI contributions with disability, while the ETC subsidises 50% of the Minimum Wage.

5. One of the functions of ETC is that of assessing the abilities of people registering for work.

Is this also the case for persons with disability?

- What kind of assessment takes place?
- Can you give some information about this assessment?

A medical assessment known as the PMO is carried out as soon as a person with disability starts to register with the ETC. Another assessment takes place, in other for the job-placement officer to identify the skills and aptitudes, which the persons possess. The latter assessment is essential, especially in the job matching or in referring persons to training courses.

6. Do you think that schools are providing vocational training for students with disability?

- Do you work with schools at secondary level with regards to vocational training and counselling for students with disability?

No, the schools are not preparing persons with disability for the transition process. I think that the schools have to provide some kind of training for the students. Contacts with schools are infrequent. These mainly occur at the end of the scholastic year, when the schools contact the ETC, in order to refer students with disability attending the school, to the ETC.

7. Are the parents involved in the transition planning?

- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
- Is it formal or informal contact?
- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?

- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?

Before starting the training courses, the parents are invited for a meeting. We keep regular contact with the parents, whose students are following a training course. It is seen that sometimes parents are over protective and that they are afraid of letting the young adults work.

8. How does the ETC promote employment for persons with disability?

- Do you contact employers?
- How are employers contacted?
- Are there opportunities for persons with disability to enter employment?
- What kind of contacts is made in order to create a positive attitude between the employers and the employees?

We contact various firms but few employers accept to engage persons with disability in work experience. In cases where persons with disability are recruited, the employers and peers at work respect persons with disability. There was a particular firm, which provided food, for employees with disability, free of charge. It is very difficult to find employers who recruit persons with disability. The employers look for employees who are 100% efficient. Sometimes, persons with disability are not able to give 100% efficiency. This problem is found not only in Malta but also almost in all the other countries. On the other hand, one has to be realistic as there are persons with severe disability who are not able to work. I think that there are opportunities for work but these opportunities are very limited.

9. Do you think that discrimination against persons with disability happens?

- What kind of discrimination takes place?
- Why do you think this happens?
- Does the ETC do something against the discrimination?

The ETC keeps contacts with the firms where persons with disability work. This is done so that the ETC makes sure that the employers are not abusing of persons with disability. But cases of discrimination were never reported to the ETC.

Interview with the executive of the Ability Development Centre at the ETC

1. What do you understand by the term “transition”?
 - What are the elements, which lead to a successful transition?
 - When do you think that transition planning should start?

I believe that transition refers to the step one takes to pass from one situation to another. I do not think that schools are giving enough preparation to students with disability with regards to the skills for independent life. I am referring to such basic yet overlooked skills as doing shoelaces and buttons.

I think that the most essential skills of transition are self-independence and social relationships. People with disability must also be prepared that the relationships, which they will eventually have with fellow workers in prospective jobs, are different from the relationships, which they have within their families. This is crucial, since there may be cases, where people with disability go into a depressive period due to bad relationships, which they may have with people at work.

2. Does the Ability Development Centre provide vocational training for people with disability?
 - What kind of training do persons with disability engage in?
 - Does the preparation include on-the-job training?
 - What happens when a person with disabilities lands a job?
 - Does this preparation end as soon as the person finds a job?

The preparation at the Ability Development Centre takes sixteen weeks, but can be extended to four more weeks in individual cases. After the course has ended, continuation from home is expected. The placement officer does job to person matchmaking. The transport is made available by ETC and the pick up point is also established.

The individuals with disability come for the course on a daily basis, five days a week. They spend two days of each week doing on the job training. They may work here or outside in

restaurants and hotels. At the moment we also have arranged for two females to work in one factory and for two males to work in another factory. Other two days of the week are spent practicing life skills, to include the learning of such skills as the writing of the Curriculum Vitae, skills in personal hygiene and social behaviour. The remaining day during the week is dedicated to applied literacy as for instance the reading of the clock, the writing of one's name, the use and management of money and the filling out of such forms as passport, identity card and the likes.

When persons with disability apply to attend for the course, a placement officer fills out forms about their particulars. The placement officer passes the forms on to this office (Ability Development Centre at ETC) and I try to keep them as up to date as possible.

3. One of the functions of Ability Development Centre is that of assessing the abilities of people registering for work. Is this also the case for persons with disability?
 - What kind of assessment takes place?
 - Can you give some information about this assessment?

When a job is eventually found, each persons' needs are taken into consideration. From there we see whether a person may need a job coach, for how long will the job coach be needed, and so forth. However there is no continuation from the ETC, since it is impossible for us to cater for everyone. At the Ability Development Centre we have a wide span of disabilities to cater for, not like at The Eden Foundation. In order for the ETC to have this continuation, a larger number of staff would be needed.

4. Do you think that schools are providing vocational training for students with disability?
 - Do you work with schools at secondary level with regards to vocational training and counseling for students with disability?

When the students in schools at secondary level arrive in Form 5, the schools contact ETC and someone from ETC goes to give talks to these fifth formers, where students with disability are also included.

I'd like to say that schools should start to treat students with disability like students without disabilities are treated. Students with disability should not be spoon-fed, by their teachers at school nor by their parents at home. More often than not what happens is that parents are over protective towards the students. But as the saying goes, one has to be cruel to be kind. After all this would be done for the students own good. I believe that schools should start teaching essential skills to students with disabilities, when these are still in their early years at school.

I think that schools should prepare students for life. Maybe it isn't possible for each and every student with disability to have a facilitator. Yet it is possible to teach students with disability the basic skills for self-independence. Moreover it is important for people with disability who are assisting to a transition program to have a job coach, who of course would not stay on forever.

5. Are the parents involved in the transition planning?

- How would you describe the contact with the parents?
- Is it formal or informal contact?
- What kind of contribution do they give
 - advisory
 - active
 - passive
 - Other kind of participation?
- Are they contacted in case of problems only?
- Are the parents informed about how they can aid the students when these start to work?

At the Ability Development Centre, meetings are organised for the parents whose students attend the course, before the course actually starts. Moreover, during the course, we keep in contact with the parents by telephone. We also have appointments with the parents, where the students' progress is discussed. The parents say what progress they have noticed with the students at home, while we talk about the progress we see happening during the course.

We do have problems with some of the parents, especially in cases where parents do not understand the difference between a Day Centre and the course at ETC. Some of them even ask whether the ETC 's transport pick up point will be from outside their house!

6. How does the Ability Development Centre promote employment for persons with disability?

- Do you contact employers?
- How are employers contacted?
- Are there opportunities for persons with disability to enter employment?
- What kind of contacts is made in order to create a positive attitude between the employers and the employees?

Through a section at ETC which caters for employment services, employers can contact us and give their requests. These requests are also passed on to this office and the placement officer tries to match a job with any person.

However I do not think that there is enough awareness with regards to persons with disability. Employers are very adamant to accept a person with disability as an employee. Few are those employers who accept to employ a person with a disability. This happens even though employers are aware that persons with disability are able to do the job.

7. Do you think that discrimination against persons with disability happens?

- What kind of discrimination takes place?
- Why do you think this happens?
- Does the ETC do something against the discrimination?

On the whole persons with disability are socially accepted at work, especially when the environment is positive. That is not to say that discrimination on the work place does not exist, even though there have not been any cases reported to the ETC. Such cases of discrimination are referred to the National Commission Persons with Disability.

Appendix I

Interview Questions For Employers

1. What process does the company go through, to employ persons with disabilities?
 - Do persons with disabilities apply for jobs in the company?
 - Are persons with disabilities employed through the service of employment and service agencies?

2. Does the company have any contacts with the ETC?
 - What kinds of contacts are there?
 - Does the company benefit from any of the schemes provided by the ETC?

3. What kind of training does the company give to persons with disabilities?
 - How long does the training last?
 - Who is responsible for the training of persons with disabilities?
 - What role does the job coach play during the training phase?
 - Is there an on-going support system for persons with disabilities at work?

4. How would you describe the relationship, which exists between the employers and the employees with disabilities?
 - What kinds of relationships are there between peer employees and employees with disabilities?
 - Where the peer employees prepared for the arrival of employees with disabilities?

5. What can you say with regards to the employment of persons with disabilities?
 - Do you have any suggestions, which can promote the employment of persons with disabilities?

Interview with Employer X

1. What process does the company go through, to employ persons with disabilities?
 - Do persons with disabilities apply for jobs in the company?
 - Are persons with disabilities employed through the service of employment and service agencies?

The company looks at the recruitment of persons with disabilities from two angles. The company may recruit persons with disabilities through mainstream recruitment. When employees send their applications, persons with disabilities are not discriminated against. The company may change the physical environment in order to suit the persons with disabilities' needs. If the persons with disabilities are able to carry out a job, no discrimination takes place against them.

The company may also recruit persons with disabilities through employment and service agencies. This is more difficult for the company to do. There has to be commitment from the top of the management in order to create vacancies for persons with disabilities. Contacts with agencies such as the ETC and The Eden Foundation take place. The company sends for the person with disability to see and make clear that our aim is to integrate him. We do not recruit persons with disabilities out of charity. During the first months, when persons with disabilities start to work here, we identify their potential work rate and training is carried out. During this process, the skills of the individuals are matched to the job. It is very important to investigate to which jobs the persons might fit.

The concept of the family still exists, today. Families protect their children and sometimes they don't understand that their sons or daughters have entered a professional agency which is not charitable and that they have to follow the company's rules. Therefore, the company has to deal not only with the persons with disabilities, but also with their families.

2. Does the company have any contacts with the ETC?
 - What kinds of contacts are there?

- Does the company benefit from any of the schemes provided by the ETC?

During the months when persons with disabilities were on training, the ETC paid half of the wage of the trainee, while the company paid the rest.

When employing persons with disabilities, there exist moral and social pressures. It is very difficult for the company to make a person, who is not working properly, redundant. In fact there were cases where persons with disabilities did not work properly because of their difficult character. In such cases, the company feels responsible. If the persons are fired, they will end without a home or at Mount Carmel. So the company tries to retain these persons and to help them. The company may suffer from this, since difficult persons, may give the firm a bad name.

3. What kind of training does the company give to persons with disabilities?

- How long does the training last?
- Who is responsible for the training of persons with disabilities?
- What role does the job coach play during the training phase?
- Is there an on-going support system for persons with disabilities at work?

Employers are to be unpretentious enough to admit that they are not experts. They should leave training in the hands of agencies like The Eden Foundation, to cater in expertise for social services and other backups.

There should be an employee in the work place to whom a person with disability can refer to, in case of problems. This is useful for persons with disabilities. In fact, when a person with disability is employed through mainstream recruitment, the bosses speak with the supervisor who will assist to the employees with disabilities, about the health and safety rules that will benefit the individual. A buddy, known here as the champion (the person who is in charge of the person with disability) stays with the persons with disabilities and trains them for the work.

Sometimes persons with disabilities fail at work because they are not willing to be employed. The majority of persons with disabilities are illiterate because time was lost out of learning in the classroom, due to sickness. Our company considers literacy as crucial to the employees. Those who work here are to be literate. The firm organizes literacy programs. Persons with disabilities find literacy to be very difficult for them to learn. If schools would consider literacy to be an important aspect to the students with disability's future, then the persons with disabilities would have more chance in finding employment. As time goes by, few are the jobs, which require few skills. It is difficult to re-train persons when such jobs as that of messenger are nowadays obsolete.

4. How would you describe the relationship, which exists between the employers and the employees with disabilities?
 - What kinds of relationships are there between peer employees and employees with disabilities?
 - Where the peer employees prepared for the arrival of employees with disabilities?

Everyone accepts persons with disabilities at work. It is very crucial for persons with disabilities to be catered for, by the peer employees, especially in case of safety. In instances like fire escapes, the peers should especially cater for persons with disabilities.

The job coach of The Eden Foundation spoke to the employees, before the persons with disabilities entered to work in our company. He explained what having a peer with disability would entail. The job coach also took it into consideration to give some information about the person with disability in question.

5. What can you say with regards to the employment of persons with disabilities?
 - Do you have any suggestions, which can promote the employment of persons with disabilities?

I think that there must be something on a national level, with regards to persons with disabilities. Problems are encountered at the company where persons with disabilities are paid

a full wage (100%) while the company is not getting 100% work from them. I think that if for instance a person gives 80% at work, the government can subsidize the other 20%. Therefore, the company will be more able to appreciate employees with disabilities. This would also be a great incentive especially to small businesses.

It is a great social responsibility for the company to promote employment for persons with disabilities. The social outcome is very productive as reintegration takes place. The Champion (buddy) feels very satisfied. In most cases peer employees come forward to act as champions and the company does not interfere. There are moments when effort is needed. De-skilled jobs such as that of telephone operators and that of messenger are decreasing. One of the disadvantages is that the company has to look for work for these persons with disabilities, when sometimes work may not be available for their needs.

Interview with Employer Y

1. What process does the company go through, to employ persons with disabilities?
 - Do persons with disabilities apply for jobs in the company?
 - Are persons with disabilities employed through the service of employment and service agencies?

The firm was always interested in recruiting persons with disabilities. Then, The Eden Foundation contacted our company and suggested that we employ a person with disability. A person from The Eden Foundation personally contacted the directors of the company, where he proposed that the company employ the person with disability. The company did not recruit the person with disability out of charity. The employers were willing to help the person with disability to be integrated in the company.

2. Does the company have any contacts with the ETC?
 - What kinds of contacts are there?
 - Does the company benefit from any of the schemes provided by the ETC?

The company had contacts with the ETC. The person with disability assisted to a work shop course at the ETC.

3. What kind of training does the company give to persons with disabilities?
 - How long does the training last?
 - Who is responsible for the training of persons with disabilities?
 - What role does the job coach play during the training phase?
 - Is there an on-going support system for persons with disabilities at work?

A job coach from The Eden Foundation, assisted the employee with disability through out the work training experience. Training took place on the work site, where he was taught how to use the fax machine, and how to perform other light office duties. The job coach aided him in learning how to catch the buses in the morning, and how to arrive at work. The training lasted three months.

The person with disability whom we employ at the company, needs continuous reinforcement of skills. In fact, an employee from the company, acts as the one who assists the person with disability at work. This peer employee remarks that although the person with disability understands how to carry out a skill, he may forget what he has to do, from time to time. The peer worker, thus reminds him what he has to do. She re-trains the person with disability at work. The employee with disability is skillful in carrying out various tasks at work, such as sending press releases through the fax machine to radio and television stations. He certainly knows how to carry out these tasks well.

The peer worker showed interest in the person with disability. In fact The Eden Foundation asked her whether she would like to act as a buddy. When the employee with disability has a problem, he refers to the buddy at work. The other peer workers try to help the person with disability at work. The buddy is very successful in her relationship with the employee with disability. Her success probably lies in her character. She is a very patient person, but is strict at work.

The job coach provided on going support. Sometimes, when changes in the environment at work occurred, a facilitator from The Eden Foundation assisted the employee with disability. When changes in the staff and the physical environment happen, the employee with disability is disrupted. Thus he needs to be oriented again at work. The facilitator used a system, whereby a list of the things, which the employee had to do, was given to him. The list served as a reminder to the employee with disability. The fact that in such cases, a facilitator was present at work was very welcome to the company, since it is impossible for the buddy to assist him all the time.

The employee with disability does overtime work like the other employees do. His wage is not different from that of his peer employees. Sometimes, the employee with disability is sent on work errands, outside the work site. The buddy trained the employee with disability to do this type of work. The training lasted one month, and did not pose any kind of problem to the buddy.

4. How would you describe the relationship, which exists between the employers and the employees with disabilities?
- What kinds of relationships are there between peer employees and employees with disabilities?
 - Where the peer employees prepared for the arrival of employees with disabilities?

A meeting was held for all the employees in the company, where the directors asked them whether they had any objections about the matter. None of the employees showed disapproval. Thus, the directors of the company took the decision and the employee with disability was finally recruited. The employees and the employers were all very eager to meet the person with disability. The job coach prepared the peer employees before the employee with disability joined the work force.

The person with disability has a good relationship with peer employees. The directors, employers, and peer workers all treat him very well. He is invited to join various leisure activities, organised by the peer workers, where for instance he joins the other workers in football matches, barbecues, staff parties, and others.

5. What can you say with regards to the employment of persons with disabilities?
- Do you have any suggestions, which can promote the employment of persons with disabilities?

Persons with disabilities are to be given the opportunity, to show their abilities at work. If I had a child with disability, I would appreciate that other people would accept him and that he would be integrated in society. It is important that persons with disabilities are engaged in employment. Work enables persons to become independent. However it is very difficult for persons with disabilities to find work, since they lack literacy skills.

Interview with Employer Z

1. What process does the company go through, to employ persons with disabilities?
 - Do persons with disabilities apply for jobs in the company?
 - Are persons with disabilities employed through the service of employment and service agencies?

The Eden Foundation sent a job developer to our company. The job developer asked whether it would be possible to hold a meeting with someone of the directors of the firm. A meeting was arranged and during the encounter, the job developer proposed that an employee with disability join the company.

Other meetings were arranged, since the directors showed interest in recruiting a person with disability. The managers met the person with disability, and took him on a tour of the company. He was then trained on site by a job coach from the Eden Foundation.

2. Does the company have any contacts with the ETC?
 - What kinds of contacts are there?
 - Does the company benefit from any of the schemes provided by the ETC?

During the training period, the company benefited from a scheme of the ETC, where the trainee with disability's wage was subsidized by the ETC.

3. What kind of training does the company give to persons with disabilities?
 - How long does the training last?
 - Who is responsible for the training of persons with disabilities?
 - What role does the job coach play during the training phase?
 - Is there an on-going support system for persons with disabilities at work?

When the person with disability first started to work in the company, a job coach assisted him at work. The job coach was with him all the time, during the training phase. The trainee was trained on how to carry out the task assigned to him. By time, the job coach started to fade out,

because the employee showed that he had learnt how to carry out the task. It did not take very long for the employer with disability to understand what he had to do.

A fellow worker, started to assist the person with disability at work. The employee with disability refers to the fellow worker when there are problems at work. He has also helped the person with disability to build relationships with the other employees. The fellow worker invites the person with disability to go out for recreational activities after work hours. The fellow worker found a lot of opposition from home, with regards to engaging the person with disability in leisure activities. The parents are very protective towards their son, and they find it difficult to accept the fact that their son is gradually becoming independent. Work has enabled the employee with disability to become independent.

4. How would you describe the relationship, which exists between the employers and the employees with disabilities?
 - What kinds of relationships are there between peer employees and employees with disabilities?
 - Where the peer employees prepared for the arrival of employees with disabilities?

The other workers have a good relationship with the person with disability. When the employee with disability first began work at the company, he was very shy. The workers tried to help him, by inviting him to join them during break hours. Gradually, the person with disability started to interact with the others, especially due to the peer worker (buddy) who helped him a lot. Nowadays, the employee with disability joins the others for staff parties and other activities, which take place after work.

The job coach prepared the peer workers for the person with disability's arrival. He gave some information about the person with disability, and how they could help him. He also explained how shy was the person, and suggested ways in which the peer workers could be of assistance.

5. What can you say with regards to the employment of persons with disabilities?

- Do you have any suggestions, which can promote the employment of persons with disabilities?

The company is satisfied with the work, which the person with disability does. There were times, when his behaviour was criticised by the supervisors or the managers. But this was not due to poor performance at work. Instead, they are angry because he sometimes forgets that he is due to work overtime. During the last few months, he was frequently asked to work overtime hours at work. His fellow worker (buddy) writes the days when the person with disability is to work overtime, in order for the person with disability to remember these days.

Employers code

Employer	Code
Employer	X
Employer	Y
Employer	Z

Appendix J

Interview Questions For The Director Of The Adult Training Centre

1. What are the activities, which persons with disability attending the Adult Training Centre, engage in during a typical day?
2. How old are the persons with disability who attend the Adult Training Centre?
 - Which schools did the persons with disability attend, before coming to the Adult Training Centre?
3. Does the Adult Training Centre promote employment for the persons with disability attending the centre?
 - Do the persons with disability, who attend the centre, learn work-related skills?
 - What kind of work-related skills do the persons with disability learn?
4. Does the Adult Training Centre search for work experiences for the persons with disability attending the centre?
 - What kind of work experiences are persons with disability engaged in?
 - Do the work experiences enable the persons with disability to earn money?
5. Are there persons with disabilities, attending the Adult Training Centre, who find work?
 - How do persons with disability attending the centre, find work?
 - Does the centre enable persons with disability to find work in open employment?
6. Are the persons with disability who attend the Adult Training Centre encouraged to participate in leisure activities in the community?
 - In what kind of leisure of activities do persons with disability engage?

Interview with the Assistant Director of the Adult Training Centre

List of persons with disability who are on the waiting list to enter the Adult Training Centres - The authors asked the transition co-ordinator of special schools about the number of persons with disability who attend special schools, and are on the waiting list to enter the Adult Training Centres. The transition co-ordinator could not provide the information, because she does not have such information in her hands.

1. What are the activities, which persons with disability attending the Adult Training Centre, engage in during a typical day?

The persons with disability, who attend this Adult Training Centre, produce crafts such as pottery, needlework and cane products. The persons are then encouraged to sell their creations. We try to engage them in activities, through which they can achieve a certain kind of autonomy. The persons with disability, are encouraged to buy the raw material and to produce crafts from the material. They can then sell their products and earn some money, which they keep for themselves. Sometimes, from the money, which they earn outings and recreational activities for the persons with disability attending the Centre, are organised.

2. How old are the persons with disability who attend the Adult Training Centre?
 - Which schools did the persons with disability attend, before coming to the Adult Training Centre?

The ages of the persons attending this Adult Training Centre varies. There may be persons coming from the special school, where the school leaving age is nineteen. There are others who are older and still live at home with their families. These may be thirty or forty years old.

3. Does the Adult Training Centre promote employment for the persons with disability attending the centre?
 - Do the persons with disability, who attend the centre, learn work-related skills?
 - What kind of work-related skills do the persons with disability learn?

At this Centre, we try to enable persons with disability to become as independent as possible. We encourage persons who have the potential, to learn skills related to work. For instance the persons with disability, who attend this Centre, rear rabbits and then they sell them to Ghammieri. The Centre also tries to search for sponsoring agencies, which may enable persons with disability to be engaged in work.

4. Does the Adult Training Centre search for work experiences for the persons with disability attending the centre?

- What kind of work experiences are persons with disability engaged in?
- Do the work experiences enable the persons with disability to earn money?

The Centre does not accept that persons with disability do factory work, at the Centre. In the past, factory work was brought at the Centre, for persons with disability to work on. However the money, which factories used to pay, was very poor, compared to the work which the persons with disability produced. The Centre is aiming at encouraging the persons with disability that attend the Centre, to live independently in a flat in the community. The persons would thus have an aim in life - that of working to live independently.

5. Are there persons with disabilities, attending the Adult Training Centre, who find work?

- How do persons with disability attending the centre, find work?
- Does the centre enable persons with disability to find work in open employment?

We had cases of persons with disability who were attending the Centre and who then found employment. However in such instances, these persons were attending The Eden Foundation's programs. There are many persons attending the Centre, who are referred to the ETC, because they have the potential to be engaged in employment. However it has rarely happened that these persons find employment.

6. Are the persons with disability who attend the Adult Training Centre encouraged to participate in leisure activities in the community?

- In what kind of leisure of activities do persons with disability engage?

We used to organise holidays abroad, for the persons with disability attending the Centre. But it was found that only a small percentage of the persons with disability were benefiting from this advantage. Moreover, when persons with disability are taken abroad, it is important that the carers who assist them are responsible and committed to their work. Unfortunately, not all the carers are responsible and efficient. Some carers consider the excursions abroad as opportunities for them to be on holiday, while the persons with disability are not properly cared for. As a result of this lack of professionalism, the trips abroad are no longer organised.

The Centre organises dinners at restaurants. Generally food is given free of charge or else at very low prices. We find that local companies, give a lot of sponsors to the persons with disability attending our Centre.

Appendix K

Interview Questions For The Park Of Friendship

1. What were the aims behind the set up of The Park of Friendship?
 - What do the visitors who come here engage in?
 - Do you enable students with disabilities to be engaged in skills, which they can use to lead more independent lives?

2. Does The Park of Friendship work with schools where students with disabilities attend?
 - What kind of contact do you have with schools?
 - Which types of schools contact The Park of Friendship?
 - Do students with disabilities engage in activities with other students without disabilities?

3. Do you think that schools are providing vocational training for students with disabilities?
 - Do you work with schools at secondary level with regards to vocational training and counselling for students with disabilities?

Interview with Activity Co-ordinator at The Park of Friendship

1. What were the aims behind the set up of The Park of Friendship?
 - What do the visitors who come here engage in?
 - Do you enable students with disabilities to be engaged in skills, which they can use to lead more independent lives?

The Park of Friendship was inaugurated eleven years ago. It was originally meant to serve as a leisure centre to be used for learning purposes. The programs and activities, which are used change for each year and are progressive. A typical students' day here, would have them involved in pottery, cookery, horse riding, go-carting and needlework.

At Razzett tal-Hbiberija, we organise fun activities through which the youngsters with disabilities can learn. Thus, through these activities, the students would be learning important skills, which could lead them to more independent lives. One of the activities we engage the students in, is cooking, where they learn, for instance, that before starting the actual activity, they are to wash their hands. The skills to be learnt are thus built step by step.

What we find very important when working with children is the use of discipline. Children should also learn to wait for their turn when using equipment. We also find it very useful to keep dangerous equipment out of the way, or at least to supervise the children whilst they are using equipment like knives.

2. Does The Park of Friendship work with schools where students with disabilities attend?
 - What kind of contact do you have with schools?
 - Which types of schools contact The Park of Friendship?
 - Do students with disabilities engage in activities with other students without disabilities?

We do not work hand in hand with the schools. But we have contacts with Head teachers and also with special schools. Students from special schools come once a week during school time. Some of the students who visit us, come with their parents, since they do not have a facilitator. We also have students without disabilities who come to The Park of

Friendship, thus integration between all the students happens. When children without disabilities and children with disabilities meet here, we observe that it is in their nature to get accustomed to each other.

3. Do you think that schools are providing vocational training for students with disabilities?

- Do you work with schools at secondary level with regards to vocational training and counselling for students with disabilities?

Schools organise visits to The Park of Friendship. The schools which visit us and schools in general, do not have the facilities and equipment, which we have, to teach these important skills to students. Here life skills, and other behaviour skills are taught. I think that ideally, these skills should be taught at school. Facilitators should be teaching these skills to their students. It is not much difficult for a kitchen to be installed in a room in school.

Each and every person is different, and each has individual needs and abilities. This is why each person should be taught in accordance to his / her individual needs.

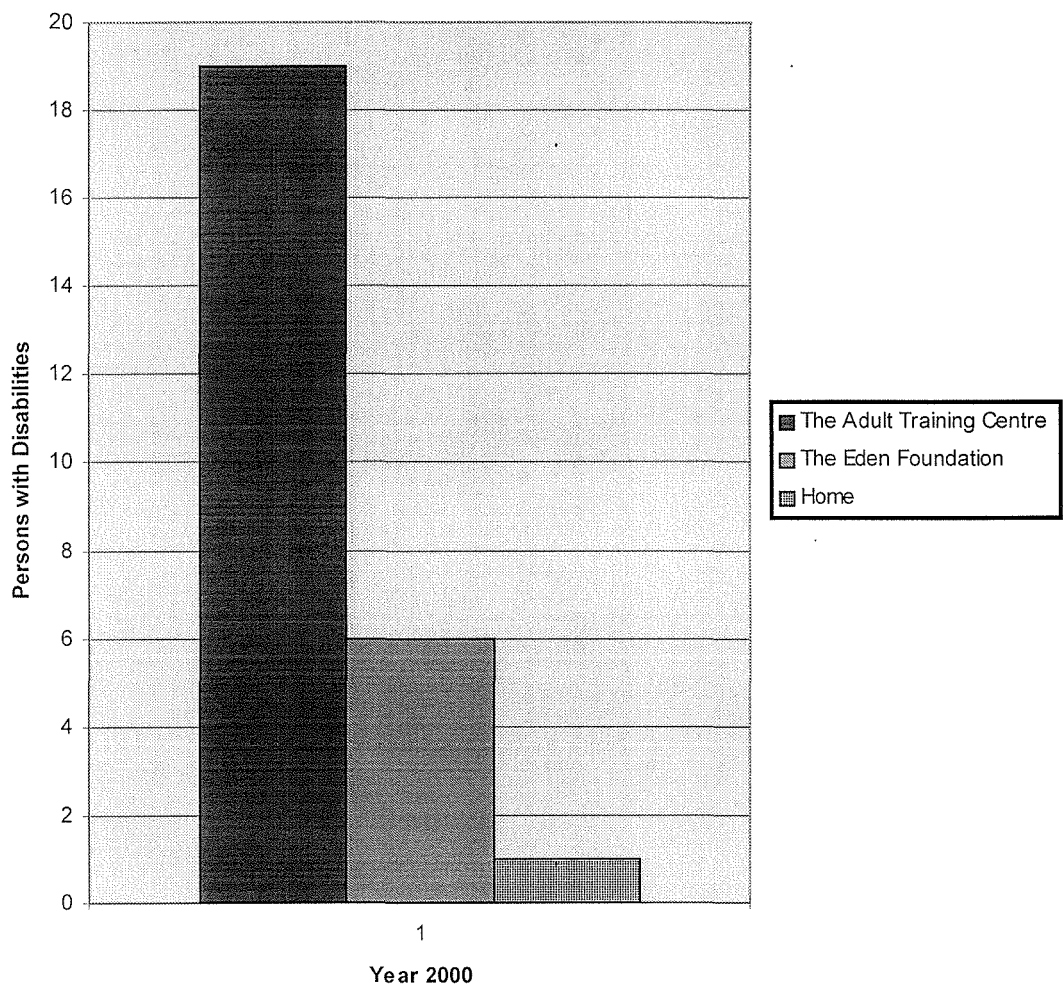
What should be done is gradual learning. Youths with disabilities should learn in a simple way. Learning should start from when the children are in Kindergarten, and continue all the way until they become adults. After all, the more young persons are, the more willing they are to learn.

Moreover, I believe that parents should have a strong say in the IEP, along with the facilitator. After all, the parents know their children best. However we do encounter youths that are very lazy, because their parents do everything for them. We also observe that some youths with disabilities are very much dependent on their facilitators, to do things for them

Appendix L

Statistics of Students with Disabilities Leaving Special Schools

Figure 4.1:



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