



Developing a Model for Promoting Social Enterprise for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities in Thailand

Vijita Rachatanantikul *, Paranee Visuttiapun and Issavara Sirirunguang

Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University, Thailand

Received 17 December 2023; Received in revised form 3 May 2024

Accepted 13 May 2024; Available online 10 June 2024

Abstract

In Thailand, there are approximately 4.19 million persons with disabilities. Most of them (35%) are of working age. These individuals are engaged in entrepreneurship in the agricultural and services. The aim of the study is to change persons with disabilities from being "receivers" of assistance to being "providers" in economic and social development. Therefore, this study uses quantitative and qualitative methods. This study used surveys, focus groups, and case studies. Participants were entrepreneurs with disabilities who registered and not yet registered as social enterprises, and experts from the public, private, and academic sectors. The findings indicated that entrepreneurs with disabilities faced the highest level of need in building confidence. The problems reported were linked to training, legal/policy, and societal attitudes towards persons with disabilities. The model for promoting social enterprises for entrepreneurs with disabilities in Thailand by the Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for Persons with Disabilities (USEID) consisted of four parts: leadership, training center, networking, and fund coordination. The findings suggest the need to enhance business and reduce taxes produced by persons with disabilities.

Keywords

Social Enterprise, Entrepreneurs with Disabilities, Social Enterprise Business Plan, Model for Promoting Social Enterprise for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities

Introduction

The concept of "disability" in the past has been viewed through the Medical Model of Disability, which suggests that persons with disabilities who are sick, exhibiting symptoms of a harmful condition, or the Religious Model of Disability, which implies that persons with disabilities are recipients of consequences due to sin or misfortune. These models describe that "persons with disabilities" are products of a society that segregates them from participating fully with others, causing persons with disabilities to feel like "The Others," devalued by societal prejudices, and labeled as special, vulnerable, and burdensome (Sawadsri,2009). Subsequently, there has been a shift in the perception of disability towards the Social Model of Disability, introduced by the World Health Organization and World Bank in their report on World Report on Disability in 2011. This model asserts that disability results from the interaction between individuals and their personal characteristics, institutions, social environments, and economic conditions. Additionally, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2007) emphasizes the importance of the employment of persons with disabilities, career guidance, independent vocational pursuits, entrepreneurship, and self-initiated business activities. This approach aligns with the International Labor Organization (ILO, 1983) to promote the professional integration of persons with disabilities, including the implementation of laws and policies that facilitate their occupational engagement.

In Thailand, there are approximately 4.19 million persons with disabilities. Most of them (35%) are of working age. (National Statistical Office, 2022). Most persons with disabilities in Thailand are primarily engaged in entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector (49.2%), followed by the service and trade sector (38.8%), and the production sector (12.0%). The occupational pursuits of persons with disabilities can be categorized into two forms: working within established enterprises and being self-employed entrepreneurs. These business activities fall into two main types. The first type, inclusive business, considers market returns and the value chain of the company. The second type, social enterprise (SE), focuses on the development of individuals, communities, and the environment. This perspective aligns with the Thai Social Enterprise Promotion Act of 2019, which encourages the registration of businesses as "social enterprises" to promote employment, problem-solving, community and social development, environmental concerns, or other public benefits. Persons with disabilities engaged in social enterprises are committed to changing the perception of disability from being 'recipients' of charity to 'contributors' who support and participate in the economic and social development of the country. However, there are only twenty-three registered social enterprises operated by persons with disabilities. The challenges of registering a social enterprise operated by persons with disabilities include identifying success factors for disability-led businesses, developing clear and appropriate

business goals and plans, and building confidence, self-discovery, and motivation for success (Diochon & Anderson, 2010). This highlights the need for studying and developing a model for promoting social enterprise for entrepreneurs with disabilities in Thailand with the goal to elevate them from being entrepreneurs with disabilities to being social entrepreneurs, thereby enhancing and developing their quality of life as well as enabling them to become more self-sufficient and contribute to society in the long run.

The concept of a social enterprise is a business model that aims to generate profit while also having social objectives. The profits generated are not intended solely for the enrichment of the owners or other stakeholders but are directed toward the development and expansion of operations for broader social responsibility. This approach supports sustainability without relying on empty grants or philanthropic funds. The goal is to contribute to the wider social and economic balance and stability by utilizing profits for the development of society (Peattie & Morley, 2008).

Becoming an entrepreneur with disability to establish a social enterprise aligns with Maslow's human motivation theory (Maslow, 2013). This theory outlines the hierarchy of human needs. Entrepreneurs with disabilities aspire to engage in a profession, achieve self-sufficiency, and gain acceptance. At the highest level of the hierarchy, there is a sense of pride in becoming a social entrepreneur and benefiting one's community or the environment. This need is associated with Integral Theory (Wilber, 2000), which explains the principles of reality and everything that exists in the Kosmos using four core components known as the Four Quadrants of the Kosmos. These quadrants include the realms of consciousness, behavior, culture, and social/environmental systems. The interrelationships within each quadrant can support entrepreneurs with disabilities when they build social enterprises. Being a social entrepreneur promotes understanding and positive attitudes toward self-reliance among persons with disabilities. Additionally, entrepreneurs with disabilities must develop business skills and establish supportive networks to sustainably operate social enterprises. Social entrepreneurs are individuals who are dedicated to innovation, constantly seeking new ideas to bring about change and solve problems to create sustainable social and environmental value. The objective of social enterprises is not solely profit maximization but rather community development, poverty alleviation, unemployment reduction, environmental sustainability, cultural enrichment, and enhancing the potential of community networks and stakeholders (Saebi et al., 2018). The widely accepted model for developing such businesses is the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010), which organizes key components of the business model into a single sheet, providing a comprehensive overview of the project in all dimensions. It can be used for both new ventures and ongoing projects to develop opportunities and improve project efficiency. The canvas, divided into 9 large squares, includes (1) Customer Segment (2) Value Proposition

(3) Channel (4) Customer Relationships (5) Key Resources (6) Key Activities (7) Key Partnerships (8) Cost Structure (9) Revenue Streams

In 2019, Thailand enacted the Social Enterprise Promotion Act, allowing the registration of businesses as "Social Enterprises" or "Social Enterprise Groups." The key characteristics of social enterprises are: (1) Their primary objectives are to promote employment for disadvantaged individuals, solve community, social, or environmental problems, or provide other benefits to society. (2) They generate revenue of not less than fifty percent from the sale of goods or services, except for enterprises that do not intend to distribute profits to shareholders or stakeholders, which may have less than fifty percent revenue from the sale of goods or services. (3) At least seventy percent of the profits are used for the objectives mentioned in (1), and profit sharing for business owners or shareholders does not exceed thirty percent of the total profits. Additionally, there are financial assistance measures from the Social Enterprise Promotion Fund, tax benefits, and procurement policies. As of August 3, 2023, there are twenty-three social enterprises that promote the quality of life and employment of persons with disabilities. Examples include Ray Social Enterprise Limited, Autism Thai Social Enterprise Limited, and Special Kids Social Enterprise Limited, which engage in business to promote vocational training and sell products made by persons with disabilities, creating value and pride for them, while also generating income for self-care and families.

From a review of research related to social enterprises for persons with disabilities both domestically and internationally, several key factors have emerged as significant gaps impacting research and development efforts to promote social enterprises for entrepreneurs with disabilities in Thailand. These include:

(1) Attitudes of Persons with Disabilities and Society: Inspiring entrepreneurs with disabilities and changing societal attitudes from viewing persons with disabilities as solely beneficiaries of charity to creating sustainable businesses involving persons with disabilities themselves (Caldwell et al., 2019). This involves networking among entrepreneurs with disabilities to exchange diverse perspectives, increase awareness of entrepreneurship, enhance individual confidence, face entrepreneurial risks, set goals, and provide necessary support (Maritz and Laferriere, 2016).

(2) Legal and Policy Aspects to Support Entrepreneurs with Disabilities in Establishing Social Enterprises: The Social Enterprise Promotion Act 2019 aims to address social issues, community development, and environmental conservation by encouraging the establishment of social enterprises. Regarding social enterprises for entrepreneurs with disabilities, there are three key points. (1) Supporting social enterprises for entrepreneurs with disabilities in social development and business operations on an equal basis. The objectives of these enterprises align with societal needs. (Diochon and Anderson, 2010). (2)

Employment policies for persons with disabilities, training for small businesses, and support for entrepreneurs with disabilities operating social enterprises (Maritz and Laferriere, 2016). (3) Initiating social enterprises by persons with disabilities fosters collaboration among businesses, government, persons with disabilities, and disability organizations to enable persons with disabilities to own businesses, addressing the unemployment and joblessness of persons with disabilities (Rozali et al., 2018).

(3) The Challenges in Meeting the Needs of Entrepreneurs with Disabilities in Establishing Social Enterprises: One of the significant challenges faced by entrepreneurs with disabilities in establishing social enterprises relates to the lack of knowledge development, innovation, and continuous promotion of social entrepreneurship. This includes the need to inspire entrepreneurs with disabilities and to change societal attitudes to support them. Entrepreneurs with disabilities hope for the development of their business quality and professional skills and aim to run their businesses in an inclusive manner, considering other groups besides those with disabilities. Additionally, establishing a quality and diverse business network, initial venture capital funding, developing a quality consumer market to support the products and services of social enterprise networks, and tax breaks for social enterprises are vital.

(4) Knowledge training to promote entrepreneurs with disabilities: Lack of institutions or organizations with sufficient capacity to adequately prepare for entrepreneurs with disabilities. This proposal outlines four steps. Step 1 , Educating Entrepreneurs involves providing clear business concepts for starting a business. Step 2 focuses on New Startups, targeting entrepreneurs with clearer business ideas. Step 3 , Early Startup addresses individuals with well-defined business plans and marketing strategies. Step 4 , Sustainable Growth Entrepreneurs, aims to support entrepreneurs in achieving sustainable growth by connecting communities, developing vision and values, and securing funding to support the process (Shaheen, 2016) Entrepreneurs who have received training and support in vocational programs can help persons with disabilities participate in business. The initial steps of the business are particularly important for persons with disabilities, such as increasing awareness of small business ownership for persons with disabilities, building self-confidence, and facing the risks of entrepreneurship, as well as setting goals for entrepreneurs and networks, and other necessary supports. (Maritz and Laferriere, 2016).

Research Methods

This paper used quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The sample size for quantitative approach was 225 out of 500 entrepreneurs with disabilities who have not yet registered as social enterprises under the Social Enterprise Promotion Act 2019, using Taro Yamane formula (1973). Data was collected using an online questionnaire and included questions on gender, type of disability, the problems and needs of entrepreneurs with

disabilities in becoming registered social enterprises, and the factors influencing entrepreneurs with disabilities as registered social enterprises. The validity of the questionnaire was 0.868.

The data collected from the survey of the sample group was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, means, standard deviation. The Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was also conducted.

(1) Descriptive statistics which analyzed general data and presented the analysis in tables with explanations, including percentages and means. This analysis was divided into three parts: general data analysis, basic analysis of entrepreneurs with disabilities, and analysis of the needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities to become registered social enterprises.

(2) The correlation analysis was conducted using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between variables, such as the relationship between the problems and needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities to become social entrepreneurs, and factors such as training, legal/policy, and attitudes of disabled individuals and society.

The qualitative approach employed in this study mainly consisted of focus groups. There were 15 participants, including 5 entrepreneurs with disabilities registered as social enterprises, 5 entrepreneurs with disabilities not yet registered as social enterprises, 5 experts in social enterprises from disability organization, business organization, government agency, educational institution, and private sector. Additionally, 5 individuals were selected for the case study. Case study participants included 3 entrepreneurs with physical and intellectual disabilities registered as social enterprises, and 2 entrepreneurs with visual and hearing impairments not yet registered. The interviews focus on operating the Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for Persons with Disabilities (USEID) and supporting entrepreneurs with disabilities in becoming a social enterprise, including business planning, funding sources, legal policies/support, attitude, and societal support. The data analysis involved comparing relationships and content to process comprehensive data and supporting mechanisms to register entrepreneurs with disabilities as social enterprises to improve their quality of life.

Content analysis was used to process data obtained by examining and evaluating the value of information from interviews, organizing data to address each objective, and assessing the completeness, adequacy, and accuracy of responses to each question. Data was collected from documents, notes, and recordings from interviews and analyzed using the Triangulation method, which involved comparing and observing the relationships between data obtained from focus group discussions and case studies. This analysis helped determine the accuracy, relevance, and consistency of the data.

In quantitative research, percentages and averages are used for analysis, while qualitative research uses interpretive methods to analyze findings and determine relationships. This study identifies the challenges faced by entrepreneurs with disabilities in establishing social enterprises, and the results of quantitative and qualitative analyses are compared to summarize the study findings. The research results are discussed, recommendations are made, and reports are written to develop strategies for promoting social enterprises for entrepreneurs with disabilities in Thailand. Policy recommendations are proposed to promote and develop entrepreneurs with disabilities as social enterprises for the benefit of policy-making agencies and organizations supporting social enterprise initiatives, aiming to enhance the quality of life for disabled individuals through the promotion of social enterprises by entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Results

From the survey of 225 people, females accounted for 61.3% and males made up 38.7% of total respondents. The disabilities these individuals disclosed included 29.8% with mobility or physical impairments, 20.9% with sensory impairments, 15.1% with intellectual impairments, 10.2% with multiple impairments, 7.6% with hearing or communication impairments, 5.3% with mental or behavioral impairments, and 0.9% with learning disabilities. The analysis of the needs and problems of entrepreneurs with disabilities in becoming social enterprises identified 8 key points. It was found that most responses rated at the highest level. These are ranked as follows: building confidence in business operations (Mean = 4.44), supporting groups/networks for social enterprises (Mean = 4.43), training in product/service innovation social business planning training (Mean = 4.40), communicating the potential of persons with disabilities (Mean = 4.38), establishing a Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for entrepreneurs with disabilities, equivalent to support for marketing channels and product distribution (Mean = 4.35), training in social business planning (Mean = 4.32), and access to funding sources and interest-free loans (Mean = 3.92).

The results on building confidence in the operation of entrepreneurs with disabilities, which had the highest level (Mean = 4.44) are consistent with the views of social enterprise entrepreneurs with disabilities. He indicated that:

Entrepreneurs with disabilities who want to have confidence in their operations must undergo training in business development to become entrepreneurs. They need people with ideas to provide knowledge and design courses tailored to the type of business for people with disabilities. They need a network of successful business to share their experiences.

Additionally, a representative of the Foundation, who operates for the benefit of persons with disabilities, shared the perspective from further discussions, stating that:

Building confidence in the group of entrepreneurs with disabilities and the network of social entrepreneurs requires taking advantage of business opportunities as a starting point. Promote what can be developed, what products or services can be offered.

The results of factors the Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities in Thailand (USEID) consists of 4 stages. In stage 1, the Incubation Stage, 4.04 was the highest average level in the development of products/services by entrepreneurs with disabilities. In stage 2, the Birth Stage, 4.11 was the highest average level for funding resources. In stage 3, the Nurturing Stage, 4.04 was the highest average level in strengthening business networks for collaborative work.

The results of the focus group and case studies of entrepreneurs with disabilities who have not yet registered as social enterprises suggested:

Supporting the businesses of persons with disabilities to achieve success requires the establishment of training centers for entrepreneurs with disabilities. It should start with training and developing the leadership skills of persons with disabilities. Both individual and group-based occupations of persons with disabilities should learn entrepreneurship by joining teams.

Furthermore, the perspective of a business organization manager that supports social enterprises for persons with disabilities revealed the following:

The product development process must involve specialized units providing knowledge and guidance. Companies should seek assistance in analyzing products, public relations, organizational structure, financial structure, marketing teams, legal teams, and business teams.

This aligns with the view of a market expert who suggested:

Entrepreneurs with disabilities should develop a business plan with a company acting as a mentor or champion project continuously in the long term. This is to clarify the production process, distribution channels, and sales processes clearly. Additionally, the government may implement measures to support businesses of persons with disabilities or vulnerable groups.

Nevertheless, entrepreneurs with disabilities who have registered as social enterprises expressed the following view:

Addressing obstacles requires ensuring that social enterprise entrepreneurs have a mutual understanding of social enterprises. It is essential to connect with the development of the capabilities of persons with disabilities, and their identity must be clearly established in terms of dignity, not out of pity or a desire to help.

This aligns with the perspective of a manager of the organization engaged in social activities who believed the following:

The Social Enterprise Promotion Act should outline plans for future promotion and support, including financial assistance from the Social Enterprise Promotion Fund. Financial support for business operations in the initial stages and clearer tax benefits according to tax regulations should be emphasized.

The analysis of factors related to problems and needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities in becoming social enterprises demonstrates significant positive correlations at the .01 level with knowledge training factors. Most factors show moderate correlations in areas such as supporting marketing channels and product distribution, building confidence in business operations, training in product/ service innovation, social enterprise planning, business groups/networks for social enterprises, communication capacity of persons with disabilities, and establishing incubation units for entrepreneurs with disabilities. The opinions of entrepreneurs with disabilities who stated that knowledge training would motivate them to become social enterprises:

The existing laws regulate mechanisms for working, funds, national committees, benefits, and promotion measures, which may be adjusted accordingly. Processes such as tracking using coaching, operational visits, and Social Impact Assessments (SIA) are motivating factors.

The analysis of factors related to problems and needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities in becoming social enterprises demonstrates significant positive correlations at the .01 level with legal/ policy factors. These factors are mostly moderately correlated with supporting marketing and distribution channels, building confidence in business operations, training in product/ service innovation, training in social enterprise planning, networks for social enterprises, and communication to enhance the capabilities of persons with disabilities. The opinions of entrepreneurs with disabilities who would like to gain legal/policy for them to become successful social enterprises, leading to persons with disabilities feeling empowered:

Enhancing knowledge through social enterprise training, such as providing basic knowledge about social enterprise, business planning,

growth strategies, and sustainable business practices, which may take approximately one year or more at each stage. Follow-up for their sustainable social enterprises towards empowering individuals with disabilities.

The analysis of factors related to problems and needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities to become social enterprises correlates positively and significantly at a .01 level with attitudes of individuals with disabilities and society factors. There is mostly a moderate correlation in terms of supporting market channels and product distribution, building confidence in business operations, training in product/service innovation, training in social enterprise planning, groups/ networks for social enterprises, communication potential of individuals with disabilities, and establishing incubation units for entrepreneurs with disabilities. The marketing finance expert shared the following insights to the wider opportunities for persons with disabilities:

Entrepreneurs with disabilities operating social enterprises communicate with disabled individuals in the community, create support groups, have mentor companies, diversify, and link businesses, providing alternative opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Studying the problems and needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities to operate social enterprises as previously mentioned, along with the analysis of the relationship between these problems and needs, specifically in the areas of knowledge training, legal and policy aspects, and attitudes of individuals with disabilities and society, there is alignment in the key findings mentioned above. Particularly, the high-level relationship between the problems and needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities in operating social enterprises in the legal and policy domain is strong. This indicates a strong desire to establish a Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for entrepreneurs with disabilities in Thailand (USEID). Therefore, taking the study results together, a model is proposed for the establishment of a Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for Persons with Disabilities (USEID) which includes 4 sections:

Section 1: Developing leadership for persons with disabilities.

Section 2: The Training Center operates on-the-job training. It is divided into 4 stages as follows: Stage 1 focuses on knowledge training during the Incubation. Stage 2: focus on knowledge training during the Birth Stage includes training on writing a business plan and building confidence. Stage 3: focus on knowledge training during the Nurturing Stage. Stage 4: focus on knowledge training during building stability.

Section 3: Network and Related Mechanisms include educational institutions, government agencies, businesses, social enterprise networks, and legal/policy support to promote benefits and to monitor and evaluate results.

Section 4: Capital Fund Coordination consists of allocating funds, fundraising, and pitching with large businesses.

Summary

This study proposes the establishment of a Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for Persons with Disabilities (USEID) that consists of the aforementioned 4 sections and presents the analysis results of the factors problems and needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities, implemented as an 8-step operational process as follows:

Step 1: Selecting and nurturing disabled individuals to become entrepreneurs, establishing a database, and altering mindsets to encourage entrepreneurship.

Step 2: Training selected entrepreneurs with disabilities in business development, modern market demands, and product design during the Incubation Stage.

Step 3: Registering as a Social Enterprise Group per the Social Enterprises Act of 2019.

Step 4: Further training entrepreneurs with disabilities on social business strategies, network building, fundraising, resource utilization, and expanding small activities.

Step 5: Registering as a Social Enterprise after the Birth Stage, focusing on job creation, community development, environmental improvement, and overall societal benefits.

Step 6: Advanced training on growth strategies, capital use, human resource development, and business partnerships during the Nurturing Stage.

Step 7: Transforming mindset of entrepreneurs with disabilities to become community contributors post-training, aligning with the Social Enterprise registration objectives.

Step 8: Advanced training on sustainable business practices, staff stability, fund support, new business partnerships, problem-solving, ethical business practices, and social responsibility.

The structure of the Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for Persons with Disabilities (USEID) and the operational steps are tailored to accommodate all types of disabilities. This study involved group discussions and case study interviews with entrepreneurs with disabilities, including those with physical impairments, intellectual disability and Autism. These insights were gathered to design the USEID model that can effectively cater to all

types of disabilities with the shared goal of empowering entrepreneurs with disabilities to start social enterprises. This is demonstrated in Figure 1.

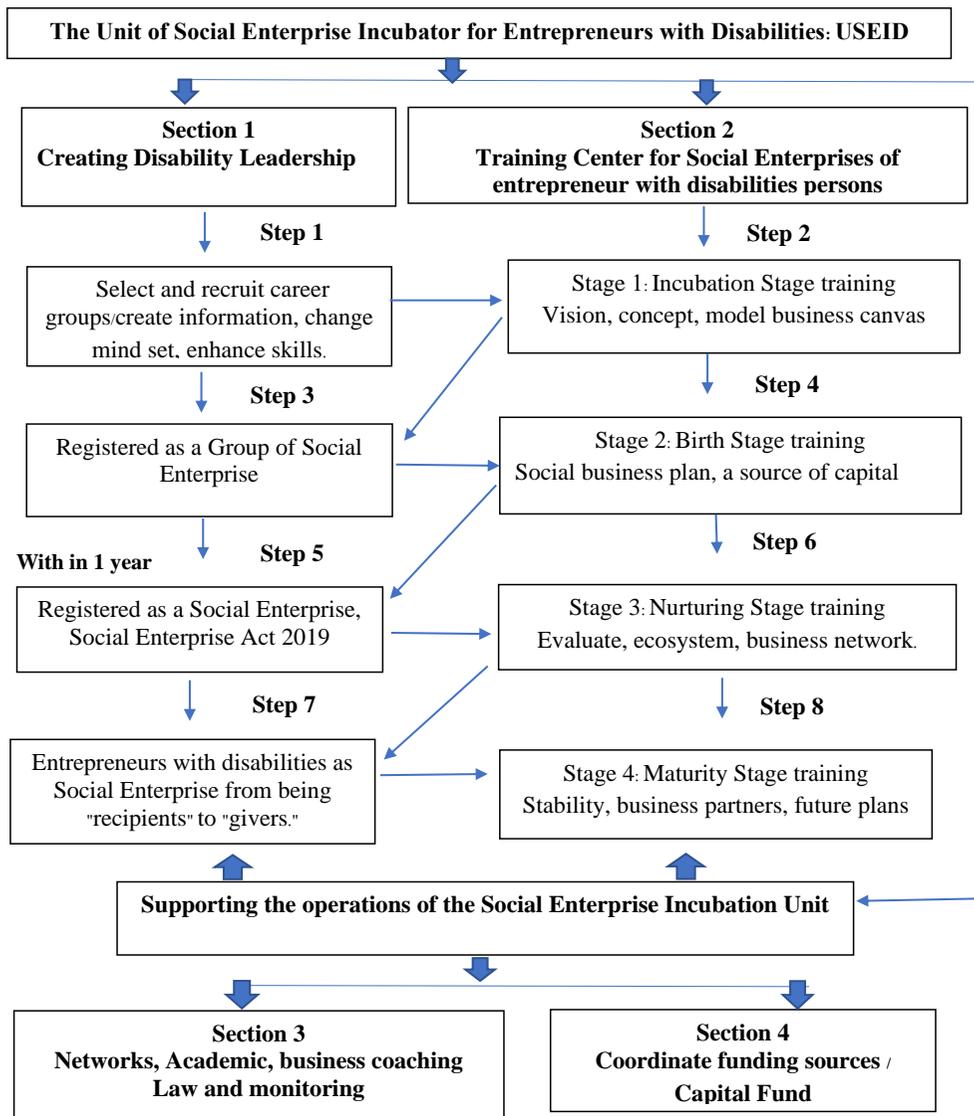


Figure 1 Developing a Model for Promoting Social Enterprises for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities in Thailand

Source: Rachatanantikul, 2023

Discussion

Entrepreneurs with disabilities aspire to change society's perception of persons with disabilities. They aim to realize their potential in pursuing careers for self-sufficiency while contributing to society. This aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where the highest level

of need is to experience self-esteem and self-respect. Additionally, it reflects the principles of Integral Science by Ken Wilber (2000), indicating the determination of individuals with disabilities to become entrepreneurs for social enterprises. This is closely related to enhancing understanding, creative attitudes towards persons with disabilities, and creating a supportive environment in terms of physical, social, and cultural aspects that impact the quality of life of persons with disabilities.

The model for promoting social enterprises of entrepreneurs with disabilities in Thailand is in line with Peattie and Morley (2008) who discussed the operational model of businesses with social objectives that aim to make a profit, but the profit generated is not solely for the enrichment of owners or other stakeholders but is used to fulfill social responsibilities. This is a form of sustainable support that does not rely on charity or donations, leading to a more balanced and stable social and economic system. The Thai Office of Social Enterprise Promotion, established under the Social Enterprise Promotion Act 2019, has measures to promote groups of social enterprises to develop into sustainable social enterprises. The guidelines for supporting entrepreneurship among persons with disabilities involve building confidence, enhancing the capabilities of entrepreneurs to understand social business plans, manage increasing challenges, and comply with state laws or policies supporting entrepreneurs with disabilities (Maritz & Laferriere, 2016). Social enterprise groups continue to promote independent occupational models for persons with disabilities by providing knowledge to entrepreneurs, especially new starters, on business concepts, business planning, marketing strategies, and community engagement (Shaheen, 2016). Persons with disabilities as entrepreneurs require training to enhance their knowledge, the establishment of social enterprise incubators for entrepreneurs with disabilities, and financial support for incubator operation, enabling entrepreneurs with disabilities to adapt social enterprise models to operate effectively within the organization's context for maximum efficiency (Rojanawong and Kongmalai, 2018). Additionally, entrepreneurs with disabilities need to build confidence in managing their businesses, enhance product development, marketing skills, create business plans and social enterprise plans, access funding sources, and meet nurture needs. They require policy support and funding sources to ensure the continuous operation of social enterprises, ultimately aiming to enhance the quality of life for communities (Awang et al., 2017). Entrepreneurs with disabilities still require support to start businesses and build trust in the business plans already prepared, avoiding actions that hinder their ability to work efficiently (Caldwell et al., 2016). Additionally, there is a clear need for training in commercial and social business operations, legal/policy support for social enterprises for persons with disabilities, promoting funding sources, and measures to promote investment in social enterprises, especially for new entrepreneurs, such as tax benefits to expand and sustain social enterprises in Thailand (Siriphatthasopon, 2015).

In line with Shaheen (2016), this study suggests the establishment of a Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for Persons with Disabilities (USEID) consisting of four steps: Step 1 - Educating Entrepreneurs, where a clear business concept is essential to start a business; Step 2 - New startups, where startup entrepreneurs have clearer business ideas; Step 3 - Early Startup, where entrepreneurs have clear business and marketing plans; and Step 4 - Sustainable Growth Entrepreneurs, focusing on community engagement, vision and values development, and funding procurement to support the process. The USEID should comprise of four sections, including: Section 1 - Leadership development for persons with disabilities; Section 2 - Training Center development, made up of training courses in four stages: Incubation Stage, Birth Stage, Nurturing Stage, and Maturity Stage; Section 3 - Networking and related mechanisms, involving educational institutions, government agencies, the private sector, and business academics to facilitate collaboration, business matching, legal and policy support, and monitoring the continuous progress of social enterprises; Section 4 - Capital Fund coordination, including subsidy allocation from funds such as the Social Enterprise Promotion Fund and funds for promoting and enhancing the quality of life for disabled individuals, fundraising from major funding sources, and joint pitching with large businesses.

Entrepreneurs with disabilities who run social enterprises must establish a vision or direction for social businesses. They need to understand the founding philosophy of a business that does not aim for maximum profit but seeks to generate profits for society. They should focus on product development, services, and operate within a successful business model canvas (Faculty of Business Administration, University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, 2018) . Clear business planning and marketing strategies are essential for sustainable growth entrepreneurs, along with community engagement, vision and values development, and funding procurement to support business processes (Shaheen, 2016) . Additionally, entrepreneurs with disabilities must be committed to innovation, creating new ideas to bring about change and address unemployment issues among persons with disabilities, aiming to generate income and foster self-reliance. Entrepreneurs with disabilities should help society within their capabilities and potential, not solely focusing on maximizing benefits but operating for the community. This means promotion of skills among entrepreneurs with disabilities, knowledge of production processes, risk reduction strategies, marketing, and fund procurement, enabling them to compete with the general population (Parinyasuthinan, 2017) . The focus in promoting social enterprise entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities includes building business skills. Organizing a variety of training courses promoting a culture of inclusion. That is, people with disabilities can be entrepreneurs just like other people. Reducing poverty and unemployment means making persons with disabilities have careers, income, and supporting themselves and their families.

and promoting equality, consulting, creating new ideas and sustainable career development paths (Sukkamnerd et al., 2012). This is consistent with social enterprise analysis in terms of positive social impact. Creating social value, the environment, solving social problems and evaluating the social return on investment (SROI). Social entrepreneurs have clear goals and objectives in operating their businesses in order to use profits to benefit the underprivileged and society. (Phasiphon, 2017).

When entrepreneurs with disabilities register as social enterprises, it changes society's perception towards persons with disabilities. Related organizations should support the development of entrepreneurs with disabilities in terms of policy, training, financial knowledge, business planning, and establishment guidelines for businesses by disabled individuals or organizations who wish to engage in business (Saiwut, 2021). The goal of social enterprises run by entrepreneurs with disabilities is to shift from being "beneficiaries" to "contributors" to the communities. The aims of social enterprise of entrepreneurs with disabilities are to be self-reliance, community assistance, environmental sustainability, and local economic development (Awang et al., 2017). Social enterprises run by entrepreneurs with disabilities are part of a positive impact linkage on society, capable of solving societal problems and fostering creative community participation. Social enterprises run by disabled individuals promote and support sustainable employment, whether through supporting disabled individuals to own businesses or promoting employment opportunities for them (Rozali et al., 2017).

This paper recommends the establishment of a Unit of Social Enterprise Incubator for entrepreneurs with disabilities in Thailand (USEID) and the development of suitable courses to promote entrepreneurs with disabilities to start social enterprises. Additionally, there should be a focus on promoting a network of social enterprises for entrepreneurs with disabilities. Relevant laws/ policies should be improved to support entrepreneurs with disabilities to start social enterprises and outlining operational plans to promote social enterprises for entrepreneurs with disabilities. This includes raising awareness about social enterprises among entrepreneurs with disabilities, fostering collaboration and support from both the government and private sectors, as well as developing quality standards for the operation of social enterprises to meet the needs of establishing social enterprises nationwide.

References

- Awang, K., Buanak, M., Cheteh, S., Chatree, R., & Parinyasutinun, U. (2017). Operation of Social Enterprises in Hanthao Community, Pak Phayun District, Phatthalung Province. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Mahasarakham University*, 36(4), 15 – 25.
- Caldwell, K., Harris, S., Renko, M. (2019). *Inclusive management for social entrepreneurs with intellectual disabilities: "how they act"*. JARID.
- Diochon, M., & Anderson, A. (2010). *Ambivalence and ambiguity in social enterprise; narratives about values in reconciling purpose and practices*. Springer.
- Faculty of Business Administration University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce. (2018). *Project to promote and develop the quality of life of Thai people with disabilities. Developing business potential for disabled organizations, Mini MBA for Social Enterprise course for disabled organizations, Class 1*. [Unpublished document]. University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce.
- International Labor Organization. (1983). *Convention Concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons)*. Geneva.
- King Prajadhipok's Institute. (2016). *Social enterprise education in Thailand: promotion of the public and private sectors. Advanced certificate course*. Public Administration and Public Law, Class 15. [Unpublished document] Copyright of King Prajadhipok's Institute.
- Maritz, A., & Laferriere, R. (2016). Entrepreneurship and self-employment for people with disabilities. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 25(2), 45-54.
- Maslow, H. (2013). *Theory of Human Motivation*. Martino Fine Books.
- National Statistical Office. (2022). *The 2022 Disability Survey. Printed by Social Statistics Division*. National Statistical Office.
- Parinyasuthinan, U. (2017). Social enterprise: Expanding community enterprise and community welfare. For managing the Thung Tam Sao community. *Journal of Community Development and Quality of Life*, 5(2), 353-364.
- Peattie, K., & Morley, A. (2008). *Social Enterprises: Diversity and Dynamics, Contexts and Contributions*. Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS). Cardiff University.
- Phasiphon, C. (2017). Evaluation of Social Return on Investment (SROI). *Journal of Education, Chulalongkorn University*, 45(4), 342 – 352.
- Rojanawong, W., & Kongmalai, O. (2018). Developing guidelines to support social enterprise operations in Thailand. *Academic journal Suan Dusit Graduate School*, 14(1), 1-17.

- Rozali, N., Abdullah, S., Jamaluddin, J., Ramil, A.J., Hussin, N.S., & Ahmad, A.Z. (2018). *Promoting Social Entrepreneurship among Entrepreneur with Disabilities in Contribution for Community*. EDP Sciences.
- Saebi, T., Nicolai Foss, N., & Linder, S. (2019). *Social Entrepreneurship Research: Past Achievements and Future Promises*. SAGE Publications.
- Saiwut, S. (2021). Guidelines for creating entrepreneurs for the disabled group in pilot project Case study of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province. *Business Administration Journal Economics and Communication Naresuan University*, 16(1), 77-102.
- Sawadsri, A. (2009). *The social model of disability and the perception of people with disabilities in Thai society*. <https://prachatai.com/journal/2009/09/25851>
- Shaheen, G. E. (2016). "Inclusive entrepreneurship": A process for improving self-employment for people with disabilities. *Journal of Policy Practice*, 15(1-2), 58-81.
- Siriphatthasophon, S. (2015). Study of the conceptual framework for the development of social enterprises in Thailand. *Journal of the Researchers Association*, 20(2), 113-143.
- Social Enterprise Promotion Act 2019. (2019). *National Office of Buddhism Printing House*.
- Sukkamnerd, D., Daengson, S., & Saringkarn, S. (2012). *The path to creating independent careers for people with disabilities and social enterprises for people with disabilities*. [Unpublished document] Health Systems Research Institute.
- United Nation. (2007). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York.
- Wilber, K. (2000). *Integral Psychology: Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy*. Shambhala.
- World Health Organization and the World Bank. (2007). *World Report on Disability*. Geneva.
- World Health Organization. (2010). *Community-based rehabilitation Metrix: CBR Metrix*. Geneva.