



# **Training on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in EU Development Cooperation**

*Course Notes*

## **Module 2: Disability and Development**



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## **Module 2: Disability and Development**

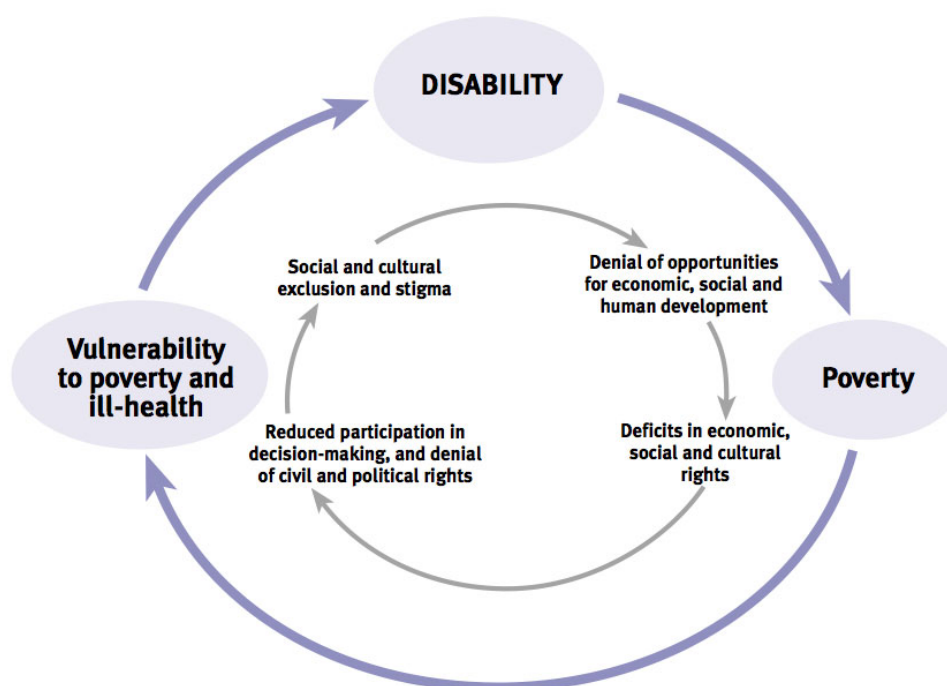
This module aims to establish the link between disability, poverty and vulnerability (2.1); demonstrate why disability is a development concern in the context of the socio-economic dis-benefits from excluding persons with disabilities (2.2); give an overview where disability features with development actors (2.3) outline the invisibility of disability on the mainstream development agenda and highlight forthcoming areas of action (2.4) and finally give a brief introduction to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its development mandate (2.5)

### **2.1. Disability, poverty and vulnerability**

The deprivation and poverty experienced by people with disabilities can be described as complex and cyclical. As Acton describes it 'poverty and disability go hand in hand forming a cycle of cumulative causation'<sup>1</sup>. The Department of International Development (DFID, also known as UKAID) describes poverty as both a cause and a consequence of disability, with both poverty and disability mutually reinforcing each other contributing to increased vulnerability and exclusion. See diagram below adapted from DFID, which visualises this cycle.

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<sup>1</sup> See Acton, Norman, Secretary General, Rehabilitation International, 1983. Quoted in O. Shirley, ed. *A Cry for Health: Poverty and Disability in the Third World* (Frome, Somerset: The Third World Group for Disabled People, 1983)



In terms of describing this cycle, first and foremost, lack of access to basic services (as a result of being poor or living in low income countries) contributes to the increase of preventable impairments. For example, a study of 56 developing countries found that the poor experienced worse health than the better off.<sup>2</sup> Further studies also demonstrate how the poverty rate led to the onset of a health conditions associated with disability including low birth weight, malnutrition<sup>3</sup>. As Elwan describes it 'the frequency with which an untreated impairment starts or accelerates the collapse of a family already in a fragile economic base' highlights how the link between disability or in her words impairment create a cycle of fragility that presents major challenges for development actors.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See Gwatkin DR et al. *Socioeconomic differences in health, nutrition, and population within developing countries*. Washington, World Bank, 2007 (Working Paper 30544).

<sup>3</sup> See Maternal and child undernutrition [special series]. *Lancet*, January 2008; *Monitoring child disability in developing countries: results from the multiple indicator cluster surveys*. United Nations Children's Fund, Division of Policy and Practice, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> See Disability Policies, Statistics, and Strategies in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Review, Pamela Dudzik, Ann Elwan, and Robert Metts

For those then who live with a disability then there are a number of barriers including inaccessible environments, discriminatory attitudes that limit their opportunities for income, and they find themselves and their families vulnerable to an increased risk of poverty. For example, studies have found that young people with disabilities are less likely to be in school than their peers without a disability, therefore, limiting their future labour market opportunities.<sup>5</sup> Also with respect to employment opportunities studies in both developed and developing countries have found that people with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed and generally earn less even when employed.<sup>6</sup> From a development perspective, in terms of getting access to microcredit for building a sustainable life, studies have found how microfinance institutions consider people with disabilities as not credit worthy and therefore are unwilling to lend.<sup>7</sup> This lack of access to education, employment and credit facilities limits the opportunity for persons with disabilities to provide for their families and increases the vulnerability of the family to acquire impairments.

## **2.2. Socio-economic dis-benefits from excluding persons with disabilities**

Persons with disabilities often lack a voice in public discourse and their interest and needs are frequently neglected. As Quinn comments 'the primary concern of people with disabilities in developing countries is simply survival and as a result they are less likely to have their voices heard'.<sup>8</sup> As discussed in Section 2.1 the inability of persons with disabilities to participate in social and economic life is the result of the interaction between their functional

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<sup>5</sup> See Filmer D. Disability, poverty, and schooling in developing countries: results from 14 household surveys. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 2008,22:141-163

<sup>6</sup> See *Sickness, disability and work: breaking the barriers. A synthesis of findings across OECD countries*. Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010; see also Houtenville AJ, Stapleton DC, Weathers RR 2nd, Burkhauser RV, eds. *Counting working-age people with disabilities. What current data tell us and options for improvement*. Kalamazoo, WE Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> See Mersland, Access to Mainstream Microfinance Services for Persons with Disabilities – Lessons learned from Uganda, Disability Studies Quarterly, and Handicap International 'Good practices for the Economic Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Developing Countries' 2006

<sup>8</sup> See Quinn, G., 'Resisting the 'Temptation of Elegance': Can the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Socialise States to Right Behaviour?' in Quinn, G. and Arnadóttir, O., eds., *The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' European and Scandinavian Perspectives* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2010) pp. 215 -255.

limitation and socio-cultural and physical barriers. It often reflects stigma and a lack of and/or inadequate access to social services, human capital formation and labour market opportunities. These barriers to inclusion have profound social and economic effects, not only on individuals with disabilities in limiting their opportunities but also on their families and/or caregivers who often forego economically productive activities to stay at home and provide care. For example, women and girls with disabilities are kept from education and employment opportunities. In terms of costing the impact of disability, it is assumed that the economic and social costs of disability are significant but are difficult to quantify.<sup>9</sup> Barriers to measuring the impact of disability include lack of agreed methodology, lack of data and variation in definitions of disability. However, some data does exist that can be classified into the direct cost of disability and indirect cost of disability.<sup>10</sup>

In terms of direct cost of disability, we can look at the extra cost of living with a disability which some countries have attempted estimates for, it ranges from between 11 – 69% of income in the UK, 20 – 37% in Ireland, 9% in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 14% in Vietnam. Additionally, public spending on programmes that benefit people with disabilities and their households can give further estimates on the cost of disability. For example, expenditure amounted to 1.5% of Gross Domestic Product in OECD countries in 2007. In terms of indirect cost of disability, this is usually discussed in economic terms and covers areas such as lost productivity due to underinvestment in skills/education of children with disabilities; lost productivity when adults leave employment and less tax revenues. While measurements are difficult, Metts in a World Bank Paper in 2004 attempted to estimate the cost of excluding persons with disabilities. He suggested that in overall economic terms, it leads to the loss and inefficient use of human capital, reduced individual and national productivity, loss of fiscal revenues and increased fiscal cost, translating into forgone GDP worldwide of somewhere between 5 and 7%.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See World Bank presentation on Socio-economic status of persons with disability and the cost of disability, 2012

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> Metts, R. (2004) Background Paper Prepared for the Disability and Development Research Agenda Meeting in the World Bank.

### **2.3 Overview where disability features with development actors – Disability in on the development agenda:**

On the basis of the vulnerability of persons with disabilities (discussed in Section 2.1) and the economic cost of excluding persons with disabilities (discussed in Section 2.2) it could be argued that there is a strong rationale for including persons with disabilities in development initiatives. Over the past decade, disability has gained currency as a policy issue in discourse related to development from the moral, legal and economic perspectives. Recent legal and policy developments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) have led to an increased recognition that disability is a development issue. A fair amount of progress has been made during the past decade, with governments and their donor agencies working to develop policies that are inclusive of individuals with disabilities. For example, at the bilateral level, the US government through USAID, Australia through AusAid, and Finland through their Ministry of Foreign Affairs have all taken action to improve accessibility and inclusion. Similar developments have also taken place at regional level with the European Union and with International Governmental Organisations such as the United Nations.

In 2010, the World Bank, with support from the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, published a report outlining where disability fits within current development policy. The report entitled, 'Disability and International Cooperation and Development: A review of Policies and Practices', examines recent policies of major multilateral and bilateral agencies, which address disability in development aid. While the review does not assess the merits or impacts of those policies, it provides an overview of current activity related to disability and development. In addition, it offers some indication of emerging trends with regard to disability in development, and these are listed below:

- **Disability has become a part of international cooperation and development aid.** The report found that all reviewed agencies have included disability in either their policies and/or programmes. In most cases, it was found that this inclusion of disability was explicit and underpinned by relevant policy frameworks. In instances where specific disability policy

framework is absent, disability is an integral part of the agencies implemented programmes.

- **International cooperation policies often link disability to Millennium**

**Development Goals (MDGs).** The MDGs were referenced in the majority of policies reviewed. Particularly MDG 1 (Eradicate hunger and extreme poverty) and MDG 2 (Universal Primary Education), there was a general recognition that these goals will not be achieved unless issues specific to poverty and access to education among persons with disabilities are adequately addressed.

- **The policies and practices reviewed often combine several approaches to frame the inclusion of disability in development cooperation.** Reviewing policies demonstrated that a human rights-based approach is increasingly being used in conjunction with other approaches such as poverty reduction for the inclusion of disability into international cooperation policies and programmes.

- **With respect to implementation and practice, the prevailing trend is to incorporate disability-specific/ targeted and mainstreaming/ inclusion/ integration programs.** Most of the surveyed agencies combine a number of approaches and instruments to include disability in development cooperation and aid. These approaches range from (a) disability specific programmes targeting disabled people and their specific needs (b) disability-specific components that are added onto mainstream programs and (c) disabled people and their specific needs being addressed within mainstream programmes.

- **Policies and programs are dynamic and have changed over time.** The review examined policies and programs aimed at including disability in development aid over the last 15 years. It is still in its infancy the changes, which have happened, have been quite rapid and reflect international developments, which have culminated in the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.



## 2.4 Disability and Mainstream Development Agenda

It is now widely accepted that unless disability is included in mainstream poverty reduction policies and programmes, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) and their efforts to reduce overall global poverty reduction will not be achieved.<sup>12</sup> This would seem to suggest that there is finally recognition that disability can no longer be sidelined as a specialist area and that it impacts not just on persons with disabilities but also their families and extended networks making it a development issue for all and making it relevant to a number of priority areas in the mainstream development discourse. The acknowledgement of the need to include persons with disabilities has received increased attention under a number of different guises. In particular, there is recognition of aid effectiveness and the need to include persons with disabilities in global poverty reduction instruments such as the MDGs.

### **Aid Effectiveness and disability:**

Within the general framework of aid effectiveness, disability to-date has featured in the Paris Declaration (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and the Busan Partnership for effective development cooperation (2011) as an issue for consideration when focusing on aid effectiveness, particularly in reaching the poorest of the poor. The Accra Agenda referenced the inclusion of disability as part of a process to make sure that developing countries and donors align their respective policies and programmes in coherence with international commitments on disability.<sup>13</sup> The most recent outcome document on aid effectiveness agreed in Busan (2011) included disability as part of shared principles to achieve common goals, again being underpinned by international commitments to promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.<sup>14</sup> At bilateral level also, there has been progress on connecting disability and aid effectiveness. In 2011, the Australian

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<sup>12</sup> See for example, The White paper on Irish Aid which states that *People with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and marginalised in developing countries. . . . It is clear now that, if the Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved, the needs of disabled people must be considered alongside other development challenges by national governments, donors, international organisations and NGOS'*

<sup>13</sup> See the Accra Agenda for Action, September 2-4, 2008

<sup>14</sup> See the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, December 2011

government announced a new aid policy. This policy was a result of an independent review on Australia's aid programme and the new policy focuses on aid reaching people to overcome poverty and includes an indicator on enhancing the lives of persons with disabilities.<sup>15</sup>

## **Global Poverty Reduction and disability**

### **Omission of disability from the original MDG's targets and indicators:**

The United Nations (UN) over the past five years have adopted no less than five resolutions that urge the inclusion of people with disabilities as a target group for the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>16</sup> This call for inclusion was influenced by a global campaign comprised of disability advocates and academics highlighting that the failure of the original MDGs to include any indicators on disability meant that the goals would never reach the poorest of the poor and therefore, will not be achieved.<sup>17</sup> See Table 1 below highlighting a campaign organised by disability advocates, which aimed to make the MDG's sensitive to disability.

Along with this call from academics and activists there was a growing consensus that the most pressing issue facing persons with disabilities globally was not their disability but rather their lack of equitable access to resources such as education and employment (as

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<sup>15</sup> See An Effective Aid Programme for Australia <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/makediff/pages/aid-policy.aspx>

<sup>16</sup> A/RES/64/131 Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for Persons with Disabilities  
A/RES/63/150 Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities through the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
A/RES/62/127. Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities  
A/RES/60/131 Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities  
A/RES/58/132 Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: towards a society for all in the twenty-first century

<sup>17</sup> For further reading see the UN Report on '*Disability and the Millennium Development Goals – A review of the MDG Process and Strategies for Inclusion of Disability Issues in Millennium Development Goal Efforts*' (2011)

highlighted in section 2.1) and how this disproportionately increased their rates of poverty. Additionally, numerous activities (including an expert meeting in 2010) and report published in 2011 by the United Nations highlighted how relevant the MDGs were to disability and also how the inclusion of disability was vital to achieving their 2015 target.

**Table 1: Disability and its relevance to the MDGs<sup>18</sup>**

MDG1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Of the estimated 1 billion persons with disabilities worldwide, 70 per cent live in developing countries, and according to UN statistics, 82 percent live below the poverty line.
MDG2: Achieve universal primary education	This is the only absolute goal and with 98 % of disabled children in developing countries not in school, it will be impossible to achieve unless they are explicitly brought into the equation.
MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and empower women	Disabled women and girls face a great deal of discrimination & disadvantage. The target of eliminating gender inequality in all levels of education by 2015 will not be reached without considering disability.
MDG 4: Reduce child mortality	Children with disabilities [can be] at higher risk of dying because of medical conditions, but also because of lack of access to public services, and intense stigma – even within their own homes (World Bank)
MDG 5: Improve Maternal Health	Up to 20 million women a year are affected by disabling impairments associated with pregnancy

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<sup>18</sup> Table adapted from the Includeeverybody.org campaign

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	and childbirth.
MDG 6: Combat HIV&AIDs, malaria and other diseases	Disabled people are particularly vulnerable to these diseases, which are also a major cause of disabling impairments.
MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	Environmental dangers can lead to the onset of many types of disabilities, and inaccessible environments prevent disabled people from taking part in economic and social activities. (World bank) One of the indicators for this goal is proportion of population with improved water and sanitation.
MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development	A partnership implies inclusion, which means everyone. Article 32 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities supports the aims and objectives of MDG 8, as it highlights the role of civil society and disabled people's organisations in the promotion of inclusive development. It demands that persons living with disabilities are included in all phases of development cooperation, planning, implementation and evaluation

**Inclusion of disability in the 2010 Outcome document:**

In September 2010, with only five years left until the 2015 deadline, world leaders met in New York to accelerate progress. From this meeting, an outcome document was produced which declared that all policies and actions must focus on the poor including people with disabilities so they benefit from achievement of MDG goals and with a particular emphasis on economic opportunities along with social services.<sup>19</sup> The outcome document also included further references to disability relevant to each MDG goal. For example, with respect to MDG 1, it called for inclusive equitable economic growth, sustainable development to promote full and decent work for all<sup>20</sup>; special efforts to be made to meet the nutritional needs of persons with disabilities<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> See Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, General Assembly, 65<sup>th</sup> Session, 2010

<sup>20</sup> See para 70 (d) under Millennium Development Goal – Eradicate poverty and extreme hunger pg 12

<sup>21</sup> See para 70 (v)

## **Beyond 2015 and UN High Level Meeting on Disability and Development**

In 2013, there will be a number of opportunities to further progress disability on the development agenda. These opportunities feature the post 2015 agenda and the High Level Meeting at the United Nations General Assembly Meeting being organised on Disability and Development. Both events are taking place in September 2013.

### **Beyond 2015 development framework and disability:**

First and foremost, in terms of 'post 2015 development framework and the forthcoming opportunities to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities the key official documents are as follows; 'Realising the future we want for all' by the United Nations and the outcome document of the Rio Sustainable conference (Rio + 20). Both documents make reference to disability. The UN report addresses disability within the context of reducing inequalities for inclusive and sustainable development.<sup>22</sup> The Rio +20 document contains five specific references to disability and they are as follows; responsibilities of States to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedom for all (paragraph 9); participation and access to information and judicial and administrative proceedings for promotion of sustainable development (paragraph 43); affirming that green economy policies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication should enhance the welfare of persons with disabilities (paragraph 58(k)); commit to promote an integrated approach to planning and building sustainable cities and urban settlements, and commit to promote sustainable development policies that support inclusive housing and social services; a safe and healthy living environment for all, particularly, disabled persons (paragraph 135) and finally, stress the need for ensuring equal access to education for persons with disabilities (paragraph 229).<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See 'Realizing the Future We Want for All, the UN System Task Team on the Post 2015 UN Development Agenda' 2012, pg. 25, 27

<sup>23</sup> See United Nations Enable website for further analysis of Rio+20 and inclusion of disability

As the negotiations and consultations are underway, there are a number of international disability organisations such as CBM and the International Disability Alliance who are preparing policy positions and supporting in country consultations to ensure that the voice of persons with disabilities are included.

## **UNGA Meeting on Disability and Development 2013**

While there has been progress made in improving the lives of persons with disabilities in developing countries, it is still accepted that people with disabilities largely remain invisible in mainstream development. It is for this reason, the United Nations General Assembly following the adoption of number of resolutions 65/186<sup>24</sup>, 66/124<sup>25</sup> and a report from the Secretary General (A/66/128)<sup>26</sup> agreed to host a high-level meeting on disability and development. This meeting will be convened on 23 September 2013, the Monday before the start of the general debate of the sixty-eighth session. The theme of the meeting will be 'The way forward: a disability inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond', and it is expected that their will be an outcome document produced to support the aims of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities. Participation in each round table will include Member States, observers and representatives of entities of the United Nations

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<sup>24</sup> See A/RES/65/186 'Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for Persons with Disabilities towards 2015 and beyond,

<sup>25</sup> See A/RES/66/124 'High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals for Persons with Disabilities

<sup>26</sup> The Secretary-General submitted his report (A/66/128) on strengthening efforts to ensure accessibility for and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of development efforts and explored options for priorities and possible outcomes for the proposed high-level meeting.

system, as well as representatives of civil society, organisations of persons with disabilities and the private sector. Each of the resolutions has placed an emphasis on the voice of persons with disabilities voices being included. For example, Resolution 66/124 has a number of references to ensuring the voice of persons with disabilities is heard at the high level meeting, it asks Member States to 'to consider including in their delegations to the High-level Meeting persons with disabilities, bearing in mind the principles of gender balance and non-discrimination and the fact that there are disability and age diversities'. It also calls on Member States to give a prominent role to delegates who are persons with disabilities and representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations from developing countries'.

## **2.5. The United Nations Convention and an introduction to its development mandate**

Module three covers the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in more detail. For the purposes of this module, the CRPD is briefly discussed with respect to its development mandate. The CRPD promotes the full integration of persons with disabilities in society. In order to realise the CRPD's implementation in low-income countries, the CRPD makes also specific reference to the importance of development cooperation in addressing the rights of persons with disabilities. All of the State Parties who have ratified the CRPD have a binding international obligation to progressively comply with the principles of the CRPD. This means that State Parties must make best use of their resources to implement the various articles of the CRPD e.g. education, housing, and employment. However, for some low-income countries this poses a difficulty. In addition, to the various articles for implementation of specific rights, the CRPD also has Article 32 on International Cooperation, which envisages a role for the development actors to assist State Parties in the implementation of the CRPD.