



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

Course Notes

Module 4: European Union Framework for Action

EuropeAid D3: Employment, Social
Inclusion, Migration.

November 2012



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Development Cooperation.**

Framework Contract Commission 2011

Contract Number 2012/288100

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Module 4: European Union Framework for Action

The European Union has a long history with respect to promoting equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. The EU's conclusion of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2010 was significant for a number of reasons. It first of all strengthened the EU's commitments to building a Union that is inclusive of persons with disabilities. Secondly, by concluding the Convention, it meant that the world's largest donor of development aid (providing more than 50% of aid worldwide) committed to ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities. This module focuses on the measures taken by the EU to include disability in its external action activities. It covers the relevant articles of the CRPD to its external action (1), it gives an overview of the relevant aspects of the EU disability strategy and the initial plan to implement the EU strategy (2); it highlights the main conclusions findings from a 2010 Report commissioned by Europe Aid on 'Disability in EC Development Cooperation' (3); it highlights the key principles of the update Guidance Note on Disability Inclusive Development Cooperation (4) and it briefly outlines future EU policy direction on development cooperation – "An Agenda for Change" (5)

1. The European Union as a party to the CRPD

The European Union concluded (more precisely "confirmed") the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 2010. Twenty-four EU member states have already ratified the CRPD with the remaining members states to do so shortly.¹ This was a

¹ Austria (ratified 2008, including the Optional Protocol); Belgium (ratified 2009, including the Optional Protocol); Bulgaria (ratified 2012); Cyprus (ratified 2011, including the Optional Protocol); Czech Republic (ratified 2009); Denmark (ratified 2009); Estonia (ratified 2012, including the Optional Protocol); France (ratified 2010, including the Optional Protocol); Germany (ratified 2009, including the Optional Protocol); Greece (ratified 2012, including the Optional Protocol); Hungary (ratified 2007, including the Optional Protocol); Italy (ratified 2009, including the Optional Protocol); Latvia (ratified 2010, including the Optional Protocol); Lithuania (ratified 2010, including the Optional Protocol); Luxembourg (ratified 2011, including the Optional Protocol); Malta (ratified 2012, including the Optional Protocol); Poland (ratified 2012); Portugal (ratified 2009, including the Optional Protocol); Romania (ratified 2011); Slovakia (ratified 2010, including the Optional Protocol); Slovenia (ratified 2008, including the Optional Protocol); Spain (ratified 2007, including the Optional Protocol); Sweden (ratified 2008, including the Optional Protocol); United Kingdom (ratified 2009, including the Optional Protocol). See UN enable website for up to-date ratification list

very significant event as this is the first legally binding international human rights instrument that the EU is a party to. Article 216(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that "agreements concluded by the Union are binding upon the institutions of the Union and on its Member States".² In the case of a treaty that has been confirmed/ratified by both the EU and individual member states (known as mixed agreements) such as the CRPD, the EU is bound by all provisions of the treaty that falls within its sphere of competence. As a result of the European Union's agreement, and in addition to their obligations as States parties to the treaty, Member States have a EU law obligation to implement the treaty to the extent that its provisions are within the scope of European Community competence. Therefore, member states that fail to comply with the obligations arising from such mixed agreements have not only breached international law but EU law also.

The CRPD is a "mixed agreement" that results in the responsibility and legal liability of both the member states and the European Union. It is expected that there is going to be greater cooperation and coherence between the EU and member states. It has been suggested that confirmation by the European Union of the CRPD confers on it a quasi-constitutional status as the CRPD's status is somewhere between a European Union treaty law and secondary legislation.³

At the very least the confirmation of the CRPD by the EU means that the interpretation of EU secondary legislation must align with the CRPD. It also means that new legislative proposals must fit with the CRPD and also advance the objectives of the Convention.

² For a detailed discussion on the Europeans Unions 'confirmation' of the CRPD see chapter 5 of Doyle, S. and Quinn, G. 'Getting a Life – Living Independently and Being Included in the Community: A Legal Study of the Current Use and Future Potential of the EU Structural Funds to Contribute to the Achievement of Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' (Geneva: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Regional Office for Europe). Available at: http://www.nuigalway.ie/cdlp/documents/getting_a_life_art_19_crpdp_and_eu_structural_funds.pdf

³ European Foundation Centre (2010), 'Study on challenges and good practices in the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities VC/2008/1214', Brussels, pages 29-30.

CRPD Articles relevant to the broad based development narrative of the EU

Before discussing the most relevant articles of the CRPD to the EU and its development framework, it is important to highlight one of the main principles of the Convention which is stipulated in Article 4.3, that is the obligation to ensure that persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are involved in the design and implementation of all policies that affect them. This overarching article cross cuts all aspects of the Convention and obligates all parties to the Convention to ensure that there is a high degree of participation by persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in all aspects of policy and decision making.

With respect to the relevant articles to the European Union and its development framework, there are a number of relevant articles, which can be highlighted, that connect the CRPD to the broader development narrative. These are as follows:

Article 11 on Situations of Risk and Humanitarian emergencies

"States Parties shall take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.

Article 28 on Adequate Standard of Living

" 1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and shall take appropriate steps to

safeguard and promote the realization of this right without discrimination on the basis of disability.

2. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to social protection and to the enjoyment of that right without discrimination on the basis of disability, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right, including measures:

- (a) to ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to clean water services, and to ensure access to appropriate and affordable services, devices and other assistance needed for disability-related needs
- (b) To ensure access by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes
- (c) To ensure access by persons with disabilities and their families living in situations of poverty to assistance from the State with disability-related expenses, including adequate training, counselling, financial assistance and respite care
- (d) To ensure access by persons with disabilities to public housing programmes
- (e) To ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to retirement benefits and programmes.

Article 31 on Data and Statistics

1. States Parties undertake to collect appropriate information, including statistical and research data, to enable them to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the present Convention. The process of collecting and maintaining this information shall:

- (a) Comply with legally established safeguards, including legislation on data protection, to ensure confidentiality and respect for the privacy of persons with disabilities;

- (b) Comply with internationally accepted norms to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and ethical principles in the collection and use of statistics.

2. The information collected in accordance with this article shall be disaggregated, as appropriate, and used to help assess the implementation of States Parties' obligations under the present Convention and to identify and address the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in exercising their rights.

3. State Parties shall assume responsibility for the dissemination of these statistics and ensure their accessibility to persons with disabilities and others.

However, while these articles are relevant to development themes, it is important to realise that all of the articles in the Convention are applicable and of equal importance to achieving the rights of persons with disabilities in developing countries and therefore must all receive equal significance in implementation.

CRPD Article and references specific to International Cooperation

As discussed at the end of Module 2 (Section 2.5) the CRPD has a development mandate. Along with Article 32, the Convention has a number of general references to international cooperation, they include (para I) of the preamble which recognises the important role of international cooperation plays with respect to all countries and in particular to developing countries.⁴ Article 4 (para 2) re-affirms each States responsibility for progressing the rights of people with disabilities to the fullest extent of their resources, and acknowledges

⁴ See Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, preamble, para (I), which 'recognises the importance of international cooperation for improving the lives of persons with disabilities in every country, including developing countries'

that for some States this might happen within a framework of international cooperation.

Article 32: International Cooperation

1. States Parties recognize the importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts for the realization of the purpose and objectives of the present Convention, and will undertake appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among States and, as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities. Such measures could include, inter alia:

(a) Ensuring that international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities;

(b) Facilitating and supporting capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices;

(c) Facilitating cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge;

(d) Providing, as appropriate, technical and economic assistance, including by facilitating access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies, and through the transfer of technologies.

2. The provisions of this article are without prejudice to the obligations of each State Party to fulfill its obligations under the present Convention.

The inclusion of Article 32 in the CRPD has been recognised as the first time a stand-alone treaty on international cooperation has been included in an international treaty.⁵ The purpose and scope of Article 32 is wide-ranging and covers a number of actors. Included in its list of actors, Article 32 identifies State Parties, international and regional organisations, and notably it specifically recognises the role of civil society and in particular organisation of persons with disabilities. The scope of Article 32 ranges from covering international development programmes, cooperation by intergovernmental agencies and State-to-State's role in providing technical and economic assistance. It sets out a range of measures from; ensuring that international development programmes are inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities; that there is a facilitation and support of capacity building, emphasising the exchange of information, experiences and training programs, and it highlights the need for cooperation in research, and the use of accessible and assistive technologies. These aspects had featured throughout the negotiations of Article 32 and they build on existing commitments already in place in international law for exchanging information and expertise.⁶ Much of the activities outlined under para 1(b-d) in Article 32 are expected to be achievable by the collaboration of a range of actors including intergovernmental organisations multilateral and bilateral aid agencies and organisations representing persons with disabilities.

What could implementation of Article 32 look like for the EU development cooperation?

In seeking clarity on what the CRPD expects of those bound by its obligations and in this case the European Union and its implementation of Article 32, it is worth referring to the process which culminates in the reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This process gives those who are party to the Convention the opportunity to conduct a review of the measures they are taking to meet a specific right, monitor the progress they have made, highlight the shortcomings and plan appropriate policy

⁵ See "Understanding the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", Marianne Schulze, 2010

⁶ See the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 23 para 4.

and legal responses.⁷ Article 35 outlines the reporting responsibilities for those who have ratified the Convention. It sets out the requirement that States must submit a report on their implementation of the Convention within two years of ratifying and thereafter at regular intervals.⁸ In formulating these reports, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted guidelines/criteria for parties to the Convention to include in their initial reports.⁹ The guidelines provide the lists of measures to be taken under each article, which is helpful in providing clarification on what is required under each Article. In terms of measures taken to implement Article 32, they set out a lengthy list to be reported on, these are as follows:

- (a) measures/steps taken to guarantee the international cooperation programmes are accessible and inclusive by persons with disabilities;
- (b) steps taken to guarantee that donor funds are properly used by recipient States in reaching persons with disabilities;
- (c) details of programmes and projects which specifically target persons with disabilities and the percentage of the total budget allocated to them;
- (d) any affirmative-action measures taken towards the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups among persons with disability, such as women, children, etc;
- (e) the degree of participation of persons with disabilities in the design, development and evaluation of programmes and projects; (f) the degree of mainstreamed action towards persons with disabilities in the general programmes and projects developed;
- (g) steps taken towards facilitating and supporting capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices;

⁷ The United Nations Human Rights Treaty System: An introduction to the core human rights treaties and the treaty bodies, Office of the High Commissioners, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FactSheet30en.pdf>

⁸ Article 35 of the Convention establishes a four yearly reporting cycle for States.

⁹ Guidelines on treaty-specific document to be submitted by states parties under article 35, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Second session Geneva, 19–23 October 2009

(h) linkages between policies and programmes targeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which take into account the rights of persons with disabilities and steps taken on the development, progress, and effectiveness of programmes for the exchange of technical know-how and expertise for the assistance of persons with disabilities.¹⁰

The reporting requirements listed above give some indication as to what the CRPD Committee will expect of parties who have ratified the Convention. The report under these heading capture a range of areas including; disability specific work, actions they have taken to promote accessibility and inclusion. The guidelines also make reference to the different identities people with disabilities may have suggesting some type of recognition about intersecting identities.

2. The European Disability Strategy 2010 -2020¹¹

The European Disability Strategy 2010 and 2020 was adopted in November 2010.¹² Its overall aim is to empower persons with disabilities so as to ensure that they enjoy their full rights and benefit fully from participating in society and in the European economy. This strategy is intended to harness the combined potential of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and the Convention, and to make full use of Europe 2020 and its instruments. Furthermore, the EU Disability Strategy is based on a rights-based approach, which emphasises the importance

¹⁰ See guidelines for Article 32 (p.19)

¹¹ Parts of this section are taken from the IDDC Mapping of Disability and Development at the EU; Framework and Actors, An Outline

¹² See COM(2010) 636 final, European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe

of ensuring that individual rights can be enjoyed in practice, in accordance with the CRPD.

The strategy provides for policies that are designed to supplement national programmes and it gives ways in which the CRPD can be effectively implemented. The focus of the strategy is placed on eliminating barriers and the European Commission has identified eight main areas on which it will centre: accessibility, participation, equality, employment, education and training, social protection, health, and external action.

In terms of external action, it asks that the EU and its Member States to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in their external action, including EU enlargement, neighbourhood and development programmes. It states that the European Commission will work where appropriate within a broader framework of non-discrimination to highlight disability as a human rights issue in the EU's external action. Areas of action listed to focus on include; raising awareness of the UN Convention and the needs of people with disabilities, including accessibility, in the area of emergency and humanitarian aid; consolidating the network of disability correspondents, increasing awareness of disability issues in EU delegations; ensuring

that candidate and potential candidate countries make progress in promoting the rights of people with disabilities and ensure that the financial instruments for pre-accession assistance are used to improve their situation. Finally, in terms of dialogue between non member States, it commits to addressing disability issues, particularly in the area of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and as an aspect of aid effectiveness.

Implementation of Area 8 on External Action

In order to ensure the implementation of the European Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020, an annex was attached presenting the specific

objectives identified in the strategy and the different actions foreseen to achieve them.¹³ Table 4.1 below taken from pg. 16 of the implementation details the specific actions to taken to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in EU external action.

Table 4.1: Implementation of Area 8 on External Action:

¹³ See SEC(2010) 1324 final, Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe Initial plan to implement the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 List of Actions 2010-2015

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Key actions	When
– Ensure that the specific needs of persons with disabilities, including those who are disabled as a consequence of natural and man-made disasters, are properly assessed and addressed in the area of emergency and humanitarian aid outside the EU	Ongoing
– Highlight disability where appropriate as a human rights issue in the EU human rights dialogues with third countries, based on the principles of the UNCRPD	2010-2015
– Ensure that EU development cooperation reaches persons with disabilities, both through projects/programmes specifically targeting persons with disabilities and by improving the mainstreaming of disability concerns	Ongoing
– Enhance coherence and complementarity between the EU approach to persons with disabilities and EU assistance to survivors of landmine and explosive remnants of war during armed conflict and its aftermath	2010-2015
– Support the national efforts of partner countries for the signature, ratification and implementation of the UNCRPD	2010-2015
– Support where appropriate the institutional strengthening of Disabled Peoples' Organisations in partner countries and organisations dealing with disability and development	2010-2015
– Consolidate the network of disability focal points in EU Delegations and at Headquarters, and increase the awareness of EU staff on disability matters	Ongoing
– Promote that infrastructure financed in the framework of EU development projects meets the accessibility requirements of people with disabilities.	2010-2015
– Update the Guidance Note on Disability and Development to be in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities	Ongoing
– Ensure that progress is made by candidate and potential candidate countries on promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and that accession funds are used to improve their situation	2010-2015
– Encourage European Neighbourhood Policy partner countries to protect the rights of persons with disabilities; mainstream disability-related issues through policy dialogue and exchange of experience; and explore possibilities for financial assistance under the European Neighbourhood Policy and Partnership Instrument	2010-2015

3. The EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy¹⁴

¹⁴ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf

In June 2012, the Foreign Affairs Council adopted a Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy with an Action Plan for putting it into practice. This is the first time that the European Union has had a unified Strategic Framework for this vital policy area, with such a wide-ranging plan of action for its implementation.

The Framework sets out principles, objectives and priorities, all designed to improve the effectiveness and consistency of EU policy as a whole in the next ten years. They provide an agreed basis for a truly collective effort, involving EU Member States as well as the EU Institutions. The Strategic Framework also anchors a commitment to genuine partnership with civil society.

The key messages of the Strategic Framework are:

- Human rights throughout EU policy
- Promoting universality of human rights
- Pursuing coherent objectives
- Human rights in all EU external policies
- Implementing EU priorities on human rights
- Working with bilateral partners
- Working through multilateral institutions
- The EU working together

The Strategic Framework builds on the joint Communication entitled 'Human rights and democracy at the heart of EU external action – towards a more effective approach'. This was adopted by the European Commission on 12 December 2011.

The EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy brings together 97 actions under 36 headings, involving the European Commission and EU Member States, which are jointly responsible for

implementation. The Action Plan and covers the period until 31 December 2014.

Action 30 focuses on the "Enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities" and includes: (a) Promote the rights of persons with disabilities, including in development programmes, in the framework of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and (b) Update the Guidance Note on Disability and Development to be in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities.

One of the commitments of the Action Plan is that the EU should present its performance in meeting its objectives in its annual report on human rights and democracy in the world. This should give an opportunity to all stakeholders in EU policy, including civil society, to assess the impact of EU action and contribute to defining future priorities.

4. An Agenda for Change¹⁵

The world is changing rapidly. Although economic growth in many developing and emerging countries has been impressive in recent years, it has not been sufficiently inclusive. Good progress towards the MDGs globally masks inequalities when the figures are disaggregated. A large number of people remain trapped in poverty because they are excluded from participating in the benefits of economic growth due to a clearly identified number of factors that cause them to be marginalized, one of which is disability.

The *Agenda for Change* sets out EU policy on future development cooperation that responds to new challenges. It recommends that the EU concentrate its development cooperation on the support for (1)

¹⁵ See http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development_policies/documents/agenda_for_change_en.pdf

human rights, democracy and other key elements of good governance and (2) inclusive and sustainable growth for human development.

With regard to disability, despite advocacy by disability organisation to specifically include disability reflecting the EU commitment to the CRPD, an explicit reference to disability was not included. However, the Agenda for Change does include a paragraph referring to a rights-based approach as well as to vulnerable groups.

"EU support to governance should feature more prominently in all partnerships. This calls for a rights-based approach, promoting in particular the right to universal and non-discriminatory access to basic services, participation in democratic political processes, transparency and accountability, justice and the rule of law, and with a focus on poor and vulnerable groups."

Due to the focus on human rights as well as on inclusive growth, there is potential to address the rights of persons with disabilities under the Agenda for Change.

5. Findings from a 2010 commissioned by Europe Aid on 'Disability in EC Development Cooperation'

In November 2010, the EC published a study on its progress to-date on including disability in EC development cooperation. The global objective of the study was described as 'to improve the inclusion of persons with disabilities in EC Development Cooperation in order to promote their rights and contribute to the reduction of poverty and the achievement of the MDGs in line with the provisions of the UN Convention'.¹⁶ The study's specific objectives were to; (1) gather information on the situation of persons with disabilities in developing

¹⁶ See Study of Disability in EC Development Cooperation, published by the European Commission (2010):

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/socialprotection/documents/223185_disability_study_en.pdf

countries (2) present information on the main political and legal framework for EC cooperation regarding disability (3) give an analysis of how the concerns of persons with disabilities have been taken into account in EC Cooperation (4) carry out an identification and analysis of the major actors in the field of development and disability looking also into possible emerging global actors with whom the EC should engage for cooperation, mutual learning and alignment purposes on the implementation of the Article 32 of the UN Convention and (5) issue a set of recommendations on measures to take in order to comply with Article 32 of the CRPD and other international commitment.

The methodology comprised of an extensive literature review and an analysis of the EC's development cooperation 2000 – 2009 in twelve selected countries. The data used for the study was taken from; projects in disability supported by the EC in 70 countries since 2000 listed in CRIS; telephone interviews with the disability contact person in EU delegations in 12 countries; Country Strategy Papers, project documents, and other relevant documents; and visits to four countries where the EU Delegation had expressed a strong interest in being part of the study¹⁷.

Overall, the study found that the EU has been very active in funding disability specific projects through NGOs and Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs). These were project in the areas of promoting human rights, social inclusion and community-based rehabilitation. However, it was found that the EU was still not systematically mainstreaming disability in its bilateral cooperation.

The report made a number of recommendations that fall into 3 broad categories; these categories are summarized as follows;

¹⁷ These countries represented a spread of countries between Africa and Asia, less developed and middle income, post conflict and peaceful

Political: Disability needs to be raised in the context of mainstream political dialogue and also in sector-specific dialogue, such as health, education and employment.

Implementation of development cooperation: To ensure that concerns of persons with disabilities are appropriately addressed in all EU funded development activities, the EU should increase its efforts to actively pursue the twin-track approach as advised in the Guidance Note on Disability and Development, by mainstreaming disability issues across all relevant projects and programmes and to have specific projects for persons with disabilities. This needs to be made a practical reality by setting realistic objectives, building capacity in government and CSOs (especially DPOs), developing relationships with CSOs, and encouraging multi-stakeholder programmes.

Organisational/ institutional: The EU should improve its knowledge and procedures in order to better address disability in development in line with the principles and commitments undertaken in international treaties and the EU Disability Strategy.

6. Guidance Note on Disability Inclusive Development Cooperation¹⁸.

In 2004, the European Commission (EC) issued its original Guidance Note on Disability and Development. This document provides advice to Commission services and EU delegations on how to address disability within the context of development cooperation and explicitly recognizes that poverty reduction goals “cannot be met without considering the needs of disabled people” and, further, that “disabled people are still not sufficiently included in international development work funded by the EU.”

¹⁸ See:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/social-protection/documents/disability_guidance_note_en.pdf

In 2012, this Guidance note was updated reflecting the EU's ratification of the CRPD and its commitments under the Disability Strategy. The main objective of the note is to raise awareness among staff working on EU development cooperation at Headquarters and in Delegations and provide general guidance on including persons with disabilities in development processes.

The Guidance Note was developed by DEVCO in close consultation with other services, such as DG Justice, the External Service, as well as the specialised NGO movement.

Its guiding principles are summarized as follows:

1. Adopt and advocate the human rights approach to disability – EU development cooperation in the field of disability has to be guided by the principles of the Convention and aim to support its implementation
2. Gather country-based analysis of the situation of people with disabilities and incorporate it in country poverty assessments – a good country analysis should uncover and highlight development trends and disparities between people with disabilities and people without disabilities in that country
3. Pursue a twin-track approach in support of the implementation of the CRPD – the twin track approach underlines the fact that disability is a cross-cutting issue; the perspectives of people with disabilities have to be included in all relevant programmes but their specific problems and needs have to be addressed to allow them to participate
4. Promote and enable active participation and contributions by disabled peoples organisations (DPOs) and disability focused organisation – when supporting partner countries in the implementation of the Convention, the EU should act in partnership with relevant civil society organisations in particular 'organisations of persons with disabilities and disability focused organisations
5. Promote accessibility and ensure that EU-funded programmes and services are accessible
6. Promote donor coordination and multi-stakeholder partnerships
7. Raise awareness and reinforce communication strategies – in line with Article 8 of the UN Convention, the EU should

undertake appropriate measures to raise awareness throughout society regarding people with disabilities.