

Resources to assist including disability in policy

This resource intends to provide some basic facts and prompts on how to mainstream disability throughout any policy or advocacy content you may be developing.

Disability-inclusive programming: Further information on including disability in development programs and projects can be found in CBM's practical guide to disability-inclusive programming, *Inclusion Made Easy* [www.cbm.org/Inclusion-Made-Easy-329091.php]

Facts and statistics: Further facts and statistics on disability and impairment can be found in the *World Report on Disability* [www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/index.html]

The Australian Disability and Development Consortium: ADDC is an Australian-based, international network that focuses attention, expertise and action on disability issues in developing countries. The ADDC website [www.addc.org.au] provides a vast range of resources on disability-inclusive development; and further information, support and events can be accessed through ADDC's free membership.

Case studies and examples: Including case studies of disability-inclusive development is a powerful way to ensure that your policy content adequately addresses disability issues. A broad range of case studies to draw from can be found in *Inclusion Made Easy* (above) or in the UN's *Best Practices for Including Persons with Disabilities in All Aspects of Development Efforts* [www.un.org/disabilities/documents/best_practices_publication_2011.pdf]

Feel free to also contact CBM Australia for particular case studies: advocacy@cbm.org.au

A note on language

In Australia, the preferred language is generally the term 'people with a disability'. This follows language used by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and encourages person-first thinking and respect for the contribution, skills and capacity of individuals who have a disability.

Individuals with disabilities themselves will often have personal preferences in relation to language. These should be respected in context where appropriate.

Disability and development: useful facts

General key facts on disability

- › 15 per cent of the world's population have a disability.
- › 80 per cent of people with a disability live in developing countries.
- › Over 20 per cent (one in five) of the world's poorest people in developing countries have a disability.
- › There are 93–150 million children under 15 years of age living with a disability worldwide.
- › Children with a disability are much less likely to attend school than children without a disability.

Children and disability

- › It is estimated that one-third of the world's children who are not in school have a disability.
- › Between 1990 and 2001, two million children around the world were killed and six million were left with a disability from armed conflict.
- › Children with a disability are often the first to be abandoned and the last to receive relief in emergency situations.
- › Children with a disability are at a higher risk of sexual and physical abuse.

Disaster response and disability

- › Disasters disproportionately place people with a disability in vulnerable situations, and increase the rate of disability in a community.
- › For every one person killed in a disaster, another three are injured or left with a permanent disability.
- › People with a disability experience particular vulnerability during natural disasters due to separation from family and loss of mobility devices.
- › There are an estimated 3.5 million refugees and internally displaced people living with a disability worldwide.
- › An estimated 40–70 per cent of refugee populations in conflict settings experience depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.
- › WHO estimates armed conflict will be the eighth most common cause of disability worldwide by 2020.

Disability and development: useful facts continued

Education and disability

- › Children with a disability are less likely to attend school than children without a disability.
- › It is estimated that one-third of all children not enrolled in school have a disability.
- › Disability has a stronger impact on school attendance than gender.
- › An increasing number of siblings and children of people with a disability, especially girls, are removed from school to fulfil caregiving responsibilities.
- › People with a disability who do not attend school as a child are more likely to live in poverty as an adult.

Health and disability

- › People with disability require health-related services both in relation to their impairment/disability and in relation to general health needs that all people have. People with disabilities are frequently excluded from both types of health services because they are too expensive and/or inaccessible for people with mobility, communication or intellectual disabilities.
- › People with a disability have a greater need to access health services and experience higher levels of unmet health needs than people without a disability.
- › It is more common for people with a disability to report an inability to afford health services than people without.
- › Women with a disability are more likely to be infected with HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases.

Livelihood and disability

- › People with a disability in developing countries experience greater poverty than those without a disability.
- › The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that 386 million people of working age have a disability, with up to 80 per cent of people with a disability unemployed in many countries.

For full references, please see *Inclusion Made Easy* [www.cbm.org/Inclusion-Made-Easy-329091.php] or contact advocacy@cbm.org.au

- › Lack of access to funds is a major obstacle for establishing a business especially for people with a disability.
- › Many potential lenders incorrectly perceive people with a disability to be a high risk for loans.

WASH and disability

- › Latrines, toilets, water and sanitation facilities are frequently inaccessible for people with disabilities; however, with appropriate planning, the cost of building accessible facilities is generally minimal.
- › When latrines are inaccessible, people with disabilities are often forced to defecate openly, which renders them much more vulnerable to assaults, falls and animal attack.
- › Use of hands for support during defecation for people with a disability increases risk of acquiring and transferring disease.
- › Inaccessible or distant water sources can force people with a disability to depend on others for water collection. This can make people with disabilities more vulnerable, and can prevent their carers or family members from engaging in other activities including education and income generation.

Women and disability

- › Up to 20 per cent of women globally have a disability.
- › Women and girls with a disability face triple discrimination: being female, having a disability and being among the poorest of the poor.
- › A significant majority of girls with a disability in developing countries remain illiterate.
- › Women with a disability are two to three times more likely to be victims of physical and sexual abuse than women without a disability.
- › Girls and women frequently act as caregivers when there is a family member with a disability, and can be denied access to education and livelihood opportunities as a result.

Advocacy for All:

A quick guide to including disability in development policy



This document aims to assist policy and advocacy officers to identify where and how to address disability throughout their own policy content.

People with disability make up over twenty percent of all of the world's poorest people. This high prevalence means that **disability is relevant to all development issues**, from women's health to WASH, education, disaster risk reduction and everything in between.

All development policy and advocacy materials should therefore include a line or two about the importance of including people with disabilities.

This document includes:

- › A checklist to help identify where and how disability is relevant to your policy content.
- › Further resources to assist you to find out more about how disability relates to your policy content.
- › Useful facts relating to disability and development that you may wish to include in your policy content.



Is disability a development issue?

Disability is an international development issue because approximately 80 per cent of those with disabilities globally live in developing countries where they constitute **over 20 per cent of the poorest of the poor**.

People with disabilities are frequently excluded from their communities due to factors such as:

- › Incorrect assumptions that people with disabilities do not require or are not capable of engaging in society, education, employment and basic services.
- › Lack of skill and understanding amongst community members and workers regarding how to engage with and assist people with disabilities.
- › Social and development activities and services often being inaccessible to people with disabilities. For example, those with mobility impairments may not be able to travel far, and communication may not include those with sensory or intellectual impairments.

When is disability relevant to policy content?

Always. Disability can be mainstreamed across all general policy content, in addition to disability-specific asks.

People with disabilities live in every community and make up more than one in five of the poorest people in developing countries. Therefore, disability is relevant to any policy content that seeks to broadly advocate for or advise on various needs of members of a community.

While it is important to raise disability-specific asks where relevant, given the high prevalence of disability, it is also important to ensure that all policy mentions and addresses disability issues where appropriate. Generally, policy content will not need to comprehensively advise on inclusive project design and implementation simply but draw attention broadly to the *need* to be inclusive.

This is ‘**mainstreaming**’ disability throughout broad policy and advocacy resources, and is a vital step towards ensuring the sector progresses towards more comprehensive disability-inclusive development.



Check list to include disability in your policy content

✓ Does your policy content ask for or advise on an initiative that will involve **built structures** (e.g. buildings, schools, hospitals, infrastructure or water and sanitation facilities)?

- › *If so, include a line to note that such built structures should be designed and built in accordance with AusAID’s ‘Accessibility Design Guide,’ to ensure that all people with mobility impairments can access them.*
- › Although there are costs associated with including people with a disability, these are often minimal when disability-inclusive practices are present from the planning and design phase (e.g. it has been estimated that using universal design principles to make a community centre and a school accessible only added 0.47% and 0.78% respectively to the overall costs).
- › The benefits of universal design pass on to people in communities including the elderly, pregnant women and people who are unwell. Any costs are far outweighed by the long-term financial benefits to individuals, families and society.

✓ Does your policy content refer to **community consultation** and/or participation?

- › *If so, include a line to note that in order to accurately reflect the views of the whole community, consultations must be held in a way that includes traditionally marginalised groups such as people with disabilities (e.g. through accessible consultation activities, and the involvement of local Disabled People’s Organisations where available).*
- › People with a disability live in every community and have unique perspectives to bring to community consultation; however, due to their systemic marginalisation within society, they often do not participate in community consultations. This means that such consultations do not accurately reflect the whole community’s needs and views.
- › Mainstream consultation activities must be accessible to people with disabilities; and where communities have links to local Disabled People’s Organisations or self-help groups for people with disabilities, these should be involved as a key strategy to inclusive consultation.

✓ Does your policy content refer to **sustainability**?

- › *If so, include a line to note that in order to effectively address sustainability issues, development must actively include people with disabilities, who are amongst the most marginalised and vulnerable to the effects of climate change.*
- › **Environmental sustainability:** Persons with disabilities are particularly at risk from the effects of climate change, such as natural disasters and food insecurity. Any framework or action plan in relation to sustainable development and climate change must incorporate disability-inclusive development principles. See the Rio +20 Outcome Document (e.g. page 135).
- › **Community sustainability:** So long as people with disabilities face barriers in accessing education, employment, health and community, they will be less able to adequately support themselves and contribute to their households and communities. Strengthening communities’ inclusiveness therefore increases communities’ sustainability, in the sense of enabling future generations of people with disabilities to meet their own needs.

✓ Does your policy content refer to **inequality in development**?

- › *If so, include a line to note that people with disabilities are amongst the poorest of the poor in developing countries; therefore, aid and development efforts must intentionally include and benefit people with disabilities if they are to redress the trend of inequality within development outcomes.*
- › While significant progress is being made towards development outcomes such as the Millennium Development Goals, this is not necessarily being achieved equitably across populations. In fact, there has been some inadvertent channelling of resources away from the poorest and most disadvantaged population groups – particularly people with disabilities. Disability issues should therefore be noted in any policy addressing inequality.

✓ Do your **case studies** accurately reflect the proportion of people with disabilities in communities?

- › *To paint an accurate picture of the needs and successes of communities, ideally one in five case studies should include someone with a disability.*
- › Stories and pictures are powerful ways of communicating issues. Around one in five of the world’s poor live with disability, and this prevalence should be reflected in the case studies and photographs in policy content.
- › Failure to do so perpetuates the misconception that people with disabilities do not have a place in communities, and distorts the perceived need to include people with disabilities in developing countries. Highlighting disability in case studies is also a strong means to demonstrate how programs work with the most marginalised people.

✓ Does your policy content refer to **data collection** or advise on **monitoring and evaluation**?

- › *If so, include a line to note the need to insure that data is disaggregated by disability, and that targets and indicators are designed to address and measure progress for those with disabilities at every stage of the development process.*
- › Understanding the numbers and circumstances for people with disabilities provides an important picture of the barriers and needs of people with disabilities.
- › Disability data sets can be established through disability questions in existing surveys and monitoring tools (e.g. censuses, household surveys, program statistics) or through dedicated disability surveys.

✓ Does your policy content refer to other **traditionally marginalised or vulnerable groups** (e.g. women and girls, children, those affected by HIV/AIDs, ethnic and language minorities)?

- › *If so, include a line to note the need for inclusion and/or consultation with people with disabilities and other ‘marginalised groups’.*
- › The issues facing various minority groups such as women, children or ethnic minorities and people with disability are complex and different. There are, however, broad similarities, meaning that if it has been identified that one such group is particularly vulnerable or excluded, it is highly likely that the other such groups (including people with disabilities) will be also.

✓ Does your policy content ask for or advise on an initiative that will involve **communication and engagement activities** (e.g. consultation, teaching or training, advocacy activity, media programs, self-help groups)?

- › *If so, include a line regarding the importance of ensuring these activities are performed inclusively, and meaningfully reach and engage with people with disability.*
- › This is important because people with disabilities are frequently excluded from community activities because of stigma, misconception regarding their need or ability to participate, and/or communication barriers.

✓ Does your policy content refer to **aid effectiveness**?

- › *If so, include a line to note that embedding systems to include people with disabilities is a key requirement to ensuring aid is effective.*
- › People with disabilities make up one in five of the world’s poorest people. Given this high prevalence of disability in developing countries, failure to include people with disabilities and their families severely jeopardises the effectiveness of development work. In order to be effective, aid and development efforts must reach all people in the communities in which they work.