



Disability as a human rights issue

Conducting a Dialogue

This paper outlines a broad policy dialogue on the rights of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) based on the following dialogue strategy: make PwD visible in statistics – follow up on compliance in regards to human rights obligations – promote disability awareness and capacity development in all operations – support meaningful participation of PwD throughout the process – monitor for results.

This paper provides a list of possible dialogue questions, guided by the international human rights treaties and based on the four principles of the human rights based approach; participation, non-discrimination, openness and transparency and accountability.

1. Make Persons with Disabilities (PwD) visible in statistics

- Promote research on disability as well as capacity building in disability and data collection methodologies.
- Promote the integration of a disability perspective in national census and statistics.
- Promote dissemination of statistics regarding PwD to local level stakeholders for planning and monitoring.

2. Follow up on compliance regarding human rights obligations

- Monitor implementation of ratified human rights conventions.
- Promote independent structures to monitor the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in accordance with its article 33 on National Implementation and Monitoring.
- Promote tools developed by the Disability Rights Promotion International's (DPRI) project.

3. Promote disability awareness and capacity development in all operations

- Promote governments to increase disability awareness in general and invest in disability awareness trainings for local authority officials, administrators and field functionaries.
- Suggest governments to develop and disseminate policy and guidelines on disability inclusive development to ministries and local level authorities.
- Promote coordination across ministries: develop and implement strategies for coordination.
- Encourage capacity development of national and local Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (DPO) for participation at national and local levels.
- In donor community: promote the creation of multi-donor working groups on disability to harmonize donor actions.
- EU delegations and bilateral embassies should sensitize governments and relevant stakeholders on a disability perspective.

4. Support participation of PwD throughout the process

- Support Organisations of Persons with Disabilities before meetings: analysis of the issues and papers at hand, training in constructive dialogue skills. Facilitate invitations and the inclusion of these organisations in the process.

This paper provides a general framework for promoting the rights of PwD. To be successful in dialogue situations further research and stakeholder analyses are needed on the country specific context. This brief is complemented by a paper that elaborates concepts and entry points in further detail.



- Promote participatory methods in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national action plans and development initiatives, based on full and effective involvement of Persons with Disabilities.
- Promote establishment of channels for communication between DPOs and governments.
- Facilitate communication between agencies, stakeholders and DPOs on disability issues. Within the donor community: promote establishment of formal processes for consulting the organisations.
- Encourage invitation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities to influence PRS and sector processes and plans.

5. Monitor for results

- Raise the issue of gaps between macro-level disability strategies and policies with micro-level disability action and point to the fact that macro- and micro levels need be linked in monitoring.
- Promote earmarked budgets targeting disability in relevant sector programs and schemes.
- Suggest that DPOs be involved in the monitoring process.
- Promote development of specific impact and outcome indicators for women, men, girls and boys with disabilities in PRS and sector programs.
- Promote inclusion of PwDs in Terms of References for annual program reviews and monitoring, planning and evaluation processes.

Sector programs where a disability perspective is particularly relevant

PwD issues are of relevance in *all* contexts and sector programs. It is a critical issue in conflict/post conflict countries, where physical and psychological war related disabilities hinder peace and economic development, as well as in peaceful countries, where exclusion of PwD from PRS and sector programs hinders effective poverty reduction. The following sectors are of particular relevance to PwD.

Democratic governance and human rights

CRPD articles 9, 12, 29, UN Standard Rule 18, Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 21, CEDAW article 7, 8, CRC articles 23.

- Suggest that local authorities establish platforms for dialogue with local DPOs.
- Promote capacity building of DPOs to improve their engagement in public decision-making processes.
- Encourage alliance-building between DPOs, government structures, NGOs and the donor community, in order to include PwD in decision-making and development processes
- Point to the need for information in accessible formats (e.g. Braille and sign language).



- Point to the need for accessible meeting facilities to allow for inclusion of PwD.
- Raise the issue of legal capacity and access to justice: accessible information, asserting and safeguarding the legal capacities of PwD, and promoting modification and adjustments of legal procedures, with references to article 9 in the UNCRPD.
- Local voting procedures: are facilities and materials accessible to PwD? Suggest training of election officers on accessibility and disability awareness campaigns.

Infrastructure

CRPD article 9, UN Standard Rule 5, CRC articles 23.

- Point to the need for accessibility standards when planning for public facilities, schools, infrastructure and transport, especially in rural and agricultural contexts.
- Promote national and regional mechanisms to exchange information between governments, DPOs and professionals in architecture and engineering associations for accessible environments.
- Encourage universal design components in academic curricula concerning professional education in architecture, building and engineering.
- Promote monitoring of compliance to existing accessibility legislation: transports, public buildings and services.

Education

CRPD article 24, Standard Rule 6, Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 26, CEDAW article 10, CRC articles 28 & 29.

- Ask for earmarked budgets for cost-effective measures to improve accessibility in schools and stress the importance of monitoring and responsibility for budgets.
- Point out the importance of awareness measures promoting positive attitude towards children with disabilities among school staff, parents and communities.
- Promote inclusion and involvement of parents of children with disabilities in educational processes.
- Suggest that women and girls with disabilities are mentioned specifically in policy documents promoting educational equity for women and girls and in policies and programs designed to promote educational equity for children with disabilities.
- Suggest data collection on enrollment and completion rates among children with disabilities in primary and secondary education.
- Stress the need for appropriate teacher training, including in special needs education for inclusive education to be effective.
- Stress the need for children with disabilities to have birth certificates and registration documents which they need to access school.
- Ask about supply and demand for vocational training opportunities for PwD.



- Children with intellectual disabilities: stress the need for assessment services that can properly assess their specific needs.
- Promote inclusive education and “Education for All” instead of special education.
- Enhance the development of flexible and relevant curricula, necessary in order to make inclusive education for all work in practice.

Health

CRPD article 25, UN Standard Rule 2, Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 25, CEDAW article 12, CRC articles 24

- Point to the need for physically accessible healthcare facilities and accessible information on health care issues, including reproductive health, and increased disability awareness among health care workers, especially in sexual and reproductive health.
- Address the need for psychosocial treatments and rehabilitation.
- Point to the fact that some Persons with Disabilities lack birth certificates or other registration documents to access health care.
- Ensure access to social security systems.

HIV/AIDS

UN Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS (2006), Declaration of Commitment and the Millennium Development Goals (2001).

- Demand that HIV/AIDS information, treatment and counseling be available to Persons with Disabilities.

- Suggest inclusion of disability in prevalence studies (protocols and instruments).
- Promote awareness training on the rights and needs of Persons with Disabilities by local health workers.

Violence against women and girls with disabilities

CRPD article 6, 16, CRC articles 34, 39, UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993

- Point out that policies, legislation and programs related to violence prevention for women and girls should specifically address women and girls with disabilities.
- Promote specific research on the extent and nature of the violence that women and girls with disabilities face at home and in communities and schools, particularly in residential schools.
- Promote educational programs on violence prevention offered to women and girls with disabilities and their families.
- Point to the need for physical, cognitive and psychological recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration for women and girls with disabilities that are victims of exploitation, violence or abuse.
- Inquire about the situation regarding institutionalization of PwD (especially intellectual and psychosocial disabilities).

Find more information, references and web links that may be useful in your dialogue on the rights of Persons with Disabilities:
www.sida.se/disabilityrights