

Statement for the High Level Meeting on Disability and Development

1. What are the major obstacles encountered and challenges faced in relation to implementing policies and programs for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities?

1. **Lack of awareness and knowledge of the paradigm shift** from a medical model of disability to a human rights based approach in compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).
2. International cooperation often overlooks the link between the UNCRPD and other human rights conventions which makes it more difficult to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities in all aspects of human life.
3. The MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals do not specifically target persons with disabilities. Therefore this group remains invisible and is in practice often **excluded from development programmes**. Measurement and tracking of progress towards the inclusion of persons with disabilities are not possible because of the lack of precise indicators (applies to the MDG and generally to mainstream programs). Moreover there is a lack of disaggregated data on disability.
4. Persons with disabilities/ Disabled People's Organisations are included mainly as beneficiaries of programmes, but not as **active contributors** in planning and implementation of development programmes at all levels.
5. Staff in development cooperation is often reluctant to incorporate another cross-cutting issue.
6. Programmes often overlook **double/triple discrimination** due to disability, age, gender and ethnicity. Refugees with disability also suffer from double discrimination.
7. Policies focus on equality and non-discrimination principles, but are ambiguous in practice and in their implementation.
8. Violence and sexual abuse are a major and ignored problem faced by persons with disabilities.
9. **Lack of clear policies protecting persons with disabilities**, especially children and young people.
10. Persons with disabilities **lack social protection** and are prone to impoverishment often due to lack of adequate funds for developing programmes and lack of insurance for persons with disabilities.
11. **Insufficient promotion of empowerment of persons with disabilities;** counselling, self-advocacy, e.g. training on the prevention of violence and sexual abuse or networking with international and national bodies and legal institutions.
12. Lack of programmes for self-development and confidence building among persons with disabilities according to their specific needs, fostering their personal development and enabling them to achieve their potential.
13. **Exclusion** of persons with disabilities and Disabled People's Organisations **from Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Response**.

2. Based on your experience, what approaches or actions have proven successful promoting the inclusion of disability in development?

According to our experience, **strong cooperation and lobbying of Civil Society Organizations** can have a major impact on disability inclusion. The umbrella organization of German development organizations, VENRO, formed a working group on disability and development in 2000. Around 20 German mainstream and disability organizations are represented in the working group. The group has been able to continuously raise the awareness of VENRO and German development NGOs for disability inclusive development and humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, the working group is **the key civil society partner for the German Government** with regard to disability inclusion in development. During the last years, the working group has lobbied the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development to include disability systematically in German development work and has advised the Ministry during the process to develop the Ministry's "Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2013 – 2015", which was launched in February 2013.

Since 2007, CBM (Christoffel-Blindenmission e.V.) has seconded a person (full-time position) to GTZ/GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), an implementation organization for governmental technical cooperation. At this time, only a part-time position was allocated to disability and development. This approach helped to **build technical expertise on disability-inclusive development** inside the organization and in addition assisted to raise awareness and to allocate government funds to inclusive development.

Another positive example of NGO cooperation is **the Asia Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Network**. Malteser International, Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB), CBM and Handicap International launched the Network during the Fifth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, which took place in October 2012 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The organizations call for the inclusion of the needs and experiences of persons with disabilities in disaster prevention and risk reduction efforts, thus making disaster-prone communities more resilient. To achieve this, the group works to empower persons with disabilities and ensure their active participation in the policy-making process. The launch of the network has already increased attention for disability inclusive disaster risk reduction.

In 2010 the Sector Initiative "Persons with Disabilities" was commissioned by BMZ, operated by GTZ, to **promote inclusive development in governmental development cooperation**. The Sector Initiative has the mandate to counsel the Ministry as well as the implementing organizations on inclusive development. This unit assisted in carrying out an exchange format on inclusive development with civil society (Round Table) and in developing an Action Plan on Inclusive Development, which was launched in February 2013. The Sector Initiative went into a new phase in 2012/13, with a renewed commitment for another three years and increased funds and number of staff.

Furthermore, we would like to stress the importance of **linking the UN CRPD with other human rights issues and respective human rights treaties**. A successful example has been the inclusion of disability in the child rights approach. As a consequence, a strong link between the UN CRPD and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has been established. This should be exemplary for linking disability rights and, for example, women's rights as well as political, economic, social and cultural rights in practice.

Another successful approach is the development of action plans at national or organizational level to implement an inclusive policy.

Other successful actions include:

1. Supporting of staff in development cooperation with **sector-specific training and advice on inclusion of persons with disabilities**.
2. Ensuring provision of **technical expertise** on inclusive development for mainstream organizations.
3. Awareness-raising: conferences with persons with disabilities in **active roles** (esp. from the Global South).
4. Employing persons with disabilities as **staff** in development cooperation.

3. What specific steps or actions should be taken to promote the goals and objectives of the CRPD to promote inclusive society and development?

States should develop and implement **an inter-ministerial national inclusion policy** (incl. development cooperation) with **precise budget allocation and indicators and a monitoring and evaluation mechanism**. This includes, inter alia, the development and implementation of accessibility guidelines for the built environment, for transportation, information and communication. The national policy should be developed in a multi-stakeholder process. Persons with disabilities and their organizations have to be actively involved at all stages of development planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

All actors working in development cooperation **should make their development cooperation and humanitarian aid inclusive**. This includes the cooperation between state and non-state actors and public-private partnerships. The inclusion of persons with disabilities should be a binding element based again on clear budget allocation and inclusive indicators. Additional funding for disability inclusion should be provided.

Awareness raising measures are an important element in this transformation process. As the cooperation with Disabled People's Organisations is a crucial element, more **persons with disabilities should be recruited as staff members** of international development organizations/institutions in order to facilitate and ensure cooperation with persons with disabilities and Disabled People's Organisations.

4. What specific measures should be taken to promote accessible environment for equal opportunities for persons with disabilities (including physical environment, information, communication and technology and transport)? What kind of policies and programs may be implemented to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities (for example, policy on education, employment and other economic opportunities)?

1. Provide advice to partner governments on including **accessibility standards in national legislation**.
2. Include regulations on **accessibility in contracts and sub-contracts for development cooperation** (including **public-private partnerships**) and a follow-up to ensure that these are realized.
3. Include regulations in bilateral development cooperation to **enforce existing accessibility standards** of developing countries.
4. **Consult with Disabled People's Organisations** from respective countries.
5. Develop and spread **evidence on the costs** of accessibility.
6. Develop and disseminate **good practices** for low-cost, robust and quality solutions for accessibility issues in low income settings.
7. Foster **comprehensive accessibility** (physical, informational etc.) in development organizations to support recruitment of persons with disabilities.

8. **Transport systems** should be made accessible for mobility-impaired persons (e.g. ramps, space inside vehicles) and should provide accessible information on the transport system (e.g. audio announcements).

Policies/programs needed to ensure equal opportunities:

1. Depending on the country context; in general, almost all sectors and activities in development cooperation offer opportunities for inclusion.
2. Often these include access to: health services/rehabilitation, education, livelihood opportunities, to begin with.

5. What actions should be taken to improve the quality and availability of disability data and statistics that is vital to formulate disability-sensitive development policies and programs at the national level? How can we improve internationally comparable disability data and statistics?

1. Include statistics on disability in **national census**; use the Washington group questions for the census.
2. To gain deeper information of the situation of persons with disabilities and the barriers they face, conduct separate **targeted disability surveys**.
3. **Disaggregate all data** on public services according to disability.
4. Include **persons with disabilities in the planning of census and disability surveys**.

6. What specific steps or actions should be taken to strengthen the capacity of all stakeholders to upgrade knowledge, develop expertise and skills to promote disability inclusion in development policies and programmes?

1. Develop **specific advice/material** for inclusive development (e.g. specific to sectors or regions) in order to support development cooperation staff.
2. Include a **disability module in mainstream training** of development cooperation staff.
3. Conduct **workshops to design actions for disability inclusion** in specific programs, and plan follow-up actions (e.g. by a focal point).
4. Conduct **disability-awareness workshops**.
5. Provide **peer-to-peer learning** on inclusive development (colleagues counselling colleagues).
6. Ensure that **technical expertise** for the implementation of inclusive development is available to staff of development organizations, e.g. by installing a focal person or stakeholder consortia providing the specific technical expertise needed.
7. Collect and disseminate **good practice examples** from various fields.
8. General remark: All trainings should include **persons with disabilities in teaching function**, if possible.

7. In addition to the areas identified above (in questions 3 to 6), what other elements should be addressed in the outcome document of the High-level Meeting particularly in view of the emerging post-2015 development agenda?

1. The new framework must be based on a **human rights approach** in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

2. Agree on a **specific goal focusing on equality and combatting discrimination**, explicitly including persons with disabilities.
3. Include equality and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities as a **cross-cutting issue** throughout the framework.
4. **Disability disaggregated data** are required to establish **targets and indicators** related to persons with disabilities in all areas and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in reporting and monitoring activities.
5. **Participation of persons with disabilities**, including organizations of persons with disabilities, in all decision-making processes connected to developing the new framework.
6. **International co-operation should be inclusive** of persons with disabilities, with both disability-specific projects as well as ensuring that all projects are inclusive of persons with disabilities.
7. Persons with disabilities should be central to all **global partnerships** under the new framework, with disability-targeted multi-stakeholder partnerships established to ensure this.

8. What are the roles of the relevant stakeholders [(a). civil society including organizations of persons with disabilities and other NGOs; (b). international organizations; (c). development agencies and (d). academic institutions]?

1. **Governments:** governments should make their development strategies, policies and programs inclusive; this also includes the area of international cooperation.
2. **International organizations:** develop treaties, resolutions, principles, guidelines, handbooks, studies on inclusive development. It is essential that international organizations provide disaggregated and new datasets on a global scale as evidence base to make inclusive development possible.
3. **Development agencies:** work towards installing disability as a cross-cutting issue throughout their own development programs, by defining concrete actions and responsibilities.
4. **Civil society (incl. DPOs):** raise awareness and provide expertise and good practice examples in the NGO/DPO community and beyond (all other stakeholders, if possible) for inclusive development.
5. **Academic institutions:** provide evidence for effective inclusive practices in development/research; include disability as a topic in relevant study courses; develop, organize and monitor specific study courses e.g. for rehabilitation professionals and inclusive education.

9. What specific role could the private sector assume in order to promote the goal of disability-inclusive society?

The private sector can substantially promote disability inclusion and the implementation of the UN CRPD, particularly the articles 4 e, 9 2 b, 21 c, 25 d and 27.

The private sector should:

1. Follow a **“do no harm” strategy**: the private sector should not infringe on human rights (e.g. health risks through pollution leading to disabilities).
2. Address inclusion of disability as a **key factor in CSR** (Corporate Social Responsibility) **policies** and practices.

3. Identify and **remove institutional, environmental and attitudinal barriers** that hinder persons with disabilities' access to employment and livelihood opportunities.
4. **Promote inclusive employment** by offering training opportunities and creating employment as well other livelihood opportunities for persons with disabilities.
5. Promote persons with disabilities **in management positions**.
6. Ensure disability inclusion in **Public Private Partnership initiatives**.
7. Spread awareness and information about **inclusive employment practices**, e.g. disability inclusive companies can be rewarded and honoured for their inclusive practice.
8. Develop **accessible technologies**, products, information environments and services according to the principles of universal design.
9. Develop **innovative and affordable assistive technologies** and devices for persons with disabilities suitable for use in low-income settings.

10. Please provide any additional suggestions or recommendations you may have for the High-level Meeting.

The High Level Meeting outcome document should:

1. Identify a **modest number of concrete actions** which tackle the **key constraints to progress** and which are achievable, affordable, and guaranteed to make an immediate difference to the maximum number of people; actions should result in tangible change which world leaders can hold up as the hallmark of the HLM for years to come.
2. Give **clear and concrete recommendations** for a post-2015 agenda, to **ensure that persons with disabilities are substantially included** in the new development agenda. All post-MDG goals should be inclusive of persons with disabilities and in compliance with the CRPD. In order to achieve this, there need to be specific indicators relating to the inclusion of persons with disabilities within each of the goals.

The High Level Meeting should:

1. Address the **production and disaggregation of data**. Without a concrete evidence base disability stands no chance to evolve from “a nice to have” catch word on a policy level to a real cross cutting issue, which is taken into account by stakeholders in their planning, implementation and evaluation of poverty reduction and development measures.
2. Ensure that **disability is understood in its diversity** and that aspects leading to multiple discrimination like gender, migration and age are being considered during the meeting and in the outcome document.
3. Include debates on **diversity budgeting** in the High-level meeting, which (based on the experience of Gender Budgeting) should ensure that budgets are accessible for and inclusive of persons with disabilities, e.g. by including costs for reasonable accommodation in budgetary provisions.
4. Be **organized in an inclusive way**, adhering to the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations will set an example to ensure that development is accessible for and inclusive of persons with disabilities.