



Disability, Development and Inclusion in International Development Cooperation:

A Scan of Disability-Related Policies and Research at Selected Multilateral and Bilateral Institutions

I) Introduction

Since the end of the Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992), the drive to include people with disabilities into development efforts has gained momentum with the popularization of a social inclusion lens for designing poverty reduction strategies. In so doing many international agencies have developed research and/or policies that not only promote a commitment to social inclusion in general but target the inclusion of marginalized groups including people with disabilities more specifically.

Inclusion International recently conducted a limited scan of policies and research on disability and development at selected bilateral and multilateral institutions¹ to gauge whether and how leading international institutions were incorporating disability into their international development cooperation. From this research resulted three main findings: 1) where there is a commitment to social inclusion in general, people with disabilities are often mentioned as part of the list of vulnerable groups without detailed actions for addressing the particular needs of people with disabilities and their families provided; 2) some international institutions have developed holistic policies on disability and inclusion demonstrating a real move towards recognizing disability and inclusion as a cross-cutting, human rights issue; and, 3) regardless of whether or not an institution has a specific policy on disability they have all conducted some form of research on disability and development of which the vast majority of this research discusses inclusion as a viable and rationale model.

The following paper reviews and summarizes the policies and research on disability at these institutions, which will later be used as the basis for an analysis paper on disability and development policies in the context of inclusion.

¹ Agencies surveyed: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), STAKES' review Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs (GDDC), Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA), Department for International Development (DfID), European Commission (EC), World Bank (WB), International Labour Organization (ILO)

II) Review of Disability Policies and Research at Leading International Institutions

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

Social Development Priorities: A Framework for Action

CIDA's Framework for Action lays out a five-year plan for confronting the most pressing needs of the poor living in developing countries as well as a clear commitment to protecting the safety and security of children worldwide. The Action Plan highlights CIDA's four development objectives, which are: health and nutrition, basic education, combating HIV/AIDS and child protection.

Health and Nutrition: While CIDA recognizes that children with disabilities are often isolated from the best available health care, the focus of its health and nutrition investments is in promoting and sponsoring proper nutrition, primary health care, water and sanitation, along with specific disease and immunization campaigns (TB) thus contributing more to disability prevention, through vitamin A and iron supplement programs, then to increased accessibility of health care and health centres.

Basic Education: In its Action Plan on Basic Education, CIDA supports improved access to basic education for all children by 2015 and places an emphasis on marginalized children including those with disabilities.

HIV/AIDS: CIDA addresses the issue of HIV/AIDS and women and children but makes no specific reference to people with disabilities living with HIV/AIDS, orphaned by or otherwise affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Child Protection: CIDA recognizes the vulnerability of children with disabilities, noting that they are often rejected by their families, communities, and service providers, do not have adequate access to rehabilitation or education, and that "*As a result of discrimination and often profound stigmatization, children with disabilities face an uncertain future.*" (CIDA 2001, website)

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)

The Inclusion of Disability in Norwegian Development Cooperation: Planning and Monitoring for the Inclusion of Disability Issues in Mainstream Development Activities

NORAD has enacted a fairly comprehensive approach to the inclusion of people with disabilities and recognizes that disability is a crosscutting issue that should be addressed in all development projects. NORAD writes,

Inclusion of disability issues in mainstream development action – inclusion is the main strategy in Norwegian development co-operation on disability (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 10.11.1999, "Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Development Co-operation" – see Box 1). An inclusive strategy focuses on the society, local community and interpersonal relations in which the

persons with disabilities are, or have the right to become, members and participants. Accordingly, an inclusive strategy aims at promoting access to the community and to an active and responsible social life for all its members. (p.5)

NORAD's Plan of Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Development Co-operation outlines four priority areas followed by four guidelines for implementation. As a follow-up, this paper determines six key strategies for poverty reduction of people with disabilities. Interesting is the framework they use.

National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES) Label us Able: Proactive Evaluation of Finnish Development Cooperation in Disability Issues

This document is the culmination of an internal review of Finnish international cooperation policy conducted by STAKES to provide 'proactive' recommendations for informing policymaking and practice around disability policy and strategy levels in Finland.

The recommendations are targeted at international and national level policymaking and at the implementation of these policies. At the international level three recommendations are put forth to for consideration by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In sum these are: explicitly incorporate disability into an international policy framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); include disability issues in future OECD/DAC guidelines; include disability in all international cooperation efforts and shape the Ministry into an international political advocate of disability as a cross-sectoral issue in its dealings with international financial and other institutions.

At the national level, STAKES proposes applying a human rights framework to disability, identifying strategies to both achieve set priorities as well as usher in a transition from existing mechanisms and procedures associated with disability policy into a cross-sectoral application of disability (in the environment, gender, education, etc), and involving the participation of disability organizations in identifying, monitoring, and evaluating policy and programs. It also proposes to update the current "Strategy for Inclusion of Disability Dimensions in the Finnish Development Cooperation" to mirror domestic disability policies in Finnish international cooperation efforts.

Department for International Development (DfID) Disability, Poverty and Development

This research paper provides an overview of disability and development issues. It discusses many of the key points in current disability thinking, such as the adoption of a rights-based approach, the use of a social not medical model, and the use of a twin-track approach to achieving equality for people with disabilities. It also states the importance of developing coherent or 'good' policies on disability by encouraging policy dialoguing to ensure that appropriate legal and policy frameworks address the inclusion of people with disabilities in social services, education and employment.

DfID's commitment to disabilities is to conduct further research into disability and development issues in order to provide the quantitative and participatory action research necessary for underlining disability as a relevant issue to the rest of the international community.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Disability Policy Paper

USAID's policy statement is rather comprehensive in its description of issues affecting people with disabilities and mechanisms for identifying and addressing these issues. USAID has a policy to incorporate disability in its project development, design and implementation as well as "*advocacy for and outreach to people with disabilities*" (USAID 1997, website). This policy applies to program funds only but compliments other USAID disability provisions regarding personnel and staffing.

USAID's policy on disability is intended to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in its own programming as well as raise awareness among players involved in its programming such as host countries and governments, local NGOs, other donors, and U.S government agencies. USAID specifically flags the issue of inclusion and notes that people with disabilities and their families have many of the same requirements as other citizens that mainstream institutions could address with relatively minor modifications.

Italian Cooperation Guidelines Concerning the Disabled (Ministry for Foreign Affairs GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (GDDC))

The first paragraph of this policy paper sets the tone for Italy's perspective on disability. The GDDC subsumes disability under the sphere of "fundamental human and civil rights" and recognizes "the right to develop their individual capacities to pursue through full integration in their own socio-cultural context; therefore the thematic initiatives of the GDDC dedicated to disabled people must include specific actions to battle against social exclusion and economic marginalization" (pg.1)

In overview, the GDDC takes a rather holistic approach to including people with disabilities in development planning by working along three general lines: ensuring participation of Disabled Peoples' Organizations (DPO) and their members, adopting a multi-disciplinary approach, and supporting processes for inclusion. This policy statement speaks specifically to supporting initiatives that enable inclusive education, employment training and creation, awareness on rehabilitation and prevention in a way that produces multiplying effects such as working in partnership with local DPOs, highlighting capacity building initiatives and funding pilot projects. It also recognizes the reality of "multiple discrimination" and commits to addressing the rights of women and minors in particular by drawing from existing international provisions (such as the Platform of Beijing) as well as Italian Cooperation Guidelines already established.

Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA) SIDA's Development Co-operation for Children and Adults with Disabilities

SIDA's disability policy approach is to fulfil the commitments outlined in the two main international instruments for promoting human rights and disability, which are: the guidelines enshrined in the World Programme of Action, a document created out of the Decade of Disabled Persons and the rules enveloped in the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

While no explicit policy was found it is worth noting that JICA clearly lists disability among its "Global Issues Index" and reports that it is promoting concrete policies and action plans aimed at expanding assistance for persons with disability. The agency notes that it realizes that the strategic implementation and expansion of projects that support the full participation of persons with disabilities in their society, and which thus allows them to take part in international cooperation endeavours as well as in their local communities, is looked upon as a means of bringing about a society in which people with disabilities can participate as full members. JICA is working to promote consideration for persons with disability in other areas of cooperation, even those areas that do not directly target them.

World Bank (WB)

In 2002 the World Bank officially publicized its commitment to including the rights of people with disabilities in its development efforts by appointing Ms. Judith E. Heumann as Disability Advisor to the World Bank. Since then the Bank has held a World Bank Conference on Disability and Development (Dec. 2002), which brought together disability advocates and development practitioners from around the world to raise awareness about the importance of including disability in all development practices. The Bank advertises just over 30 World Bank sponsored projects that include issues affecting persons with disabilities.

While the World Bank does not yet have a policy on disability, it is clearly in the process of expanding its understanding and expertise in the field of disability and development. So far it has produced two documents to support its commitment to including people with disabilities, which are: 1) Poverty and Disability: A Survey of the Literature, Ann Elwan, Social Protection Unit, Human Development Network, World Bank, December 1999; 2) Baseline Assessment: Inclusion and Disability in World Bank Activities, Deborah Stienstra, Yutta Fricke, April D'Aubin and Research Team, Canadian Centre on Disability Studies, June 2002 among other initiatives already underway.

European Commission

Mainstreaming Disability Within EU Employment and Social Policy (A DG V Services Working Paper)

This paper outlines the European Union's commitment to addressing the social exclusion of people with disabilities. The 1996 Community Disability Strategy (endorsed by the European Commission) outlined a transition from a charity-based approach to a rights based approach in the disability policy field while the Amsterdam Treaty and Agenda 2000 provide a platform for furthering political will around and strengthening of disability policy in the EU. Today, disability is entrenched in almost all National Plans of Action of Member States - all of which is raising the profile of disability within the European Union.

The Commission intends to implement a comprehensive strategy for combating social exclusion for which disability is explicitly recognized. The framework for Social Security, Demography and Public Health will involve the majority of disability-specific considerations. This paper recognizes that addressing disability-related issues is not about changing the individual to fit into society – or rehabilitation – but by widening systems to be encompassing of all its citizens.

European Commissions (DG Development)

Guidance Note on Disability and Development for EU Delegations and Services

The EC Guidance Note is intended to provide background on the situation of people with disabilities to inform European international cooperation planning. Overall the Guidance Note adopts a rather holistic outlook on disability by advocating for a human rights model to disability complimented by a twin-track approach to programming. As with DFID, the twin-track approach recognizes the crosscutting reality of disability while and the validity in “mainstreaming” disability while also calling for disability specific policies and programs to ensure that development efforts address disability in a way that is appropriate and inclusive. It identifies exclusion as the main cause of poverty while noting the prevalence of poverty among people with disabilities.

Programmatically, the Guidance Note suggests that all EU funded projects are truly inclusive of disability, that these programs assess disability and monitor how it is being included in development efforts and how successful these efforts are in effectively tackling issues affecting people with disabilities and their families. To do this, this paper recommends a real emphasis on capacity building of disability organizations and communication between governments, disability organizations and other stakeholders. Finally, the Guidance Note looks internally and highlights that EU services must also be inclusive of people with disabilities.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Disability and Poverty Reduction Strategies: How to Ensure that Access of Persons with Disabilities to Decent and Productive Work is Part of the PRSP Process.

Released in November 2002, the ILO has written a rather comprehensive discussion paper on disability and poverty reduction. This paper recognizes many of the fundamental barriers faced by people with disabilities, listing social misperception as their greatest disadvantage.

This paper was written to complement the World Bank Sourcebook on PRSPs in a way that reflects the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention (No. 159) and that respects the potential for real and productive contribution by people with disabilities, not as welfare cases but as capable and active citizens. It also makes an important note that while the focus of the paper is on poverty reduction, all sector policies - from education to health - must adopt a similarly inclusive approach since they directly related to the productive potential of an individual.

This paper calls for a multi-sectoral approach to disability policy. It maps out a “smart” disability policy, one that requires multi-sectoral responsibility and one that makes both good economic and social sense while at the same time empowering people with disabilities to assist themselves.

United Nations (UN)

The UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1994)

The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities calls for governments to take action towards the provision of political rights and economic opportunities for citizens with disabilities. It is intended to serve as an instrument for national policy-making and as guidelines for technical and economic cooperation.

The Standard Rules draw from the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons – the most influential document to come out of the UN Decade of Disabled Persons. The Standard Rules are a set of 22 rules concerning disabled persons consisted in four chapters. These are: preconditions for equal participation; target areas for equal participation; implementation measures; and, the monitoring mechanism.

III) Works Cited

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