

Breaking the cycle of poverty and disability in Development Cooperation

A European Commission funded project on including disability in development cooperation policies across the EU

Disability and poverty

There are 600 million people with disabilities worldwide, 70-80% of them live in developing countries. People with disabilities in developing countries are trapped in a vicious circle of poverty and disability. Despite the clear link between disability and poverty people with disabilities are not included in most of the development activities of the EU. Without inclusion of disabled people into development cooperation, the Millennium Development Goals will not be achieved.

Aim of the project

For the first time, 12 major organizations of disabled people and NGOs have united to develop instruments for EU Member State Governments and non-state actors to include the disability dimension in their development cooperation instruments. This project aims both to document what has already been done in this field, as well as to develop the tools and capacities to improve the inclusion of disability in development cooperation.

Mapping

All the partners have begun the first stage of the project that involves a mapping of disability in development policies and practices across the 25 member states and the EU institutions. This mapping will analyse the status of disability in development cooperation policies and legislation leading to the development of training and materials and tools. The themes will be tailored to the needs and interests of policy makers and development practitioners across the target countries and institutions concerned.

National and regional trainings

After the mapping exercise national and regional trainings will be provided for staff members of the development co-operation departments in Ministries, governmental and non-governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, disabled people organizations, and other non-state actors. Furthermore, training tools will be developed which can be used beyond this project for further trainings with other stakeholders and/or other countries. The first national training, focused on disability mainstreaming and HIV/AIDS in development cooperation, will take place on 5th of May 2006 in Brussels.

European conferences

Among the other project activities, two European conferences on disability and development will be held for the representatives from Government, civil society and the research sector of all 25 EU member states and the European Institutions. The first conference will be organized in Brussels in October 2006; the second will take place in the spring of 2007 in Bratislava.

Database

In May 2006 a website with database of resources and best practices in disability mainstreaming in development cooperation will be set up. The website will pool the relevant reference documents on disability mainstreaming in development cooperation and will also work as a gateway to other reference websites and resource centres. As the project develops, the website will be enriched by the material produced by the project: the results of the mappings, training tools, workshop reports or good practice reports.

Gender perspective

The gender perspective will be included in all activities of the project in order to ensure an adequate response to the specific situation of women with disabilities in developing countries.

Partners in this European Initiative 'Breaking the Cycle of Poverty & Disability in Development Cooperation': LIGHT FOR THE WORLD (Austria), Handicap International (France and Luxembourg), CBM (Germany), AIFO (Italy), DCDD (Netherlands), National Disability Council of the Netherlands (Netherlands), eRko (Slovakia), Healthlink (UK), PHOS (Belgium), SHIA (Sweden), DPI Italia (Italy), Groupement Français des Personnes Handicapées (France)