Norad

Report

"Mainstreaming Disability in Development Cooperation"

Oslo
27th to 29th March 2011

NORAD in cooperation with UN's Special Rapporteur on disability organized a seminar on how to mainstream people with disabilities in development cooperation. The seminar took place in Oslo 27-29th March 2011. The seminar gathered more than 60 representatives from UN agencies, multilateral organizations, Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs), development agencies and regional bodies. Both Northern and Southern representatives were present. The aim was first to identify obstacles to why people with disabilities are excluded in development cooperation. Secondly, the task was to find possible solutions to overcome the obstacles. The main obstacles found were the lack of awareness and needs of people with disabilities, lack of sufficient statistics and indicators, absence of political interest and attention and finally, lack of guidelines on how to mainstream. The main solution identified was to establish a focal point in development aid agencies or in ministries responsible for disability. Furthermore the organisations of persons with disabilities must be strengthened and regarded as partners in development.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

This report aims to gather the most important findings from the discussions undertaken during the seminar "Mainstreaming Disability in Development Cooperation" which took place March 27-29th 2011 in Oslo.

The aims of the seminar were first to identify the obstacles to why disabled people's needs are scarcely visible within development cooperation. Following these findings and analyzing the common obstacles the next step was to propose possible solutions to the obstacles. The political fundament which led to this seminar is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. By May 23 2011 it had 100 ratifications and 148 signatories. Article 32 states the following:

> "1. States Parties recognize the importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts for the realization of the purpose and objectives of the present Convention, and will undertake appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among States and, as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities. Such measures could include, inter alia:
>
> **a) Ensuring that international cooperation, including international development programs, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities;**
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> b) Facilitating and supporting capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programs and best practices;
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> c) Facilitating cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge;
>
> d) Providing, as appropriate, technical and economic assistance, including by facilitating access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies, and through the transfer of technologies.
>
> 2. The provisions of this article are without prejudice to the obligations of each State Party to fulfill its obligations under the present Convention."

One of the objectives of this seminar was to gather representatives from various sectors, both donors and recipients from the South and North.

The seminar gathered in total 67 participants from both UN agencies, development agencies, Government representatives from the South, multilateral organizations, Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) from the South and North and International DPOs.

The seminar consisted of plenary presentations, discussions, and panel debates as well as group discussions. It was organized as a working seminar. The representatives from different sectors worked together in mixed groups in order to ensure a comprehensive input from both South and North as well as from NGOs and government representatives. The groups convened were (A) Primary Education, (B) Attitudes and Awareness, (C) Government to Government Cooperation, (D) Multilateral Cooperation and (E) Economy and Employment. The findings and recommendations in this report derive from all of the sessions undertaken. Although the seminar did not pass a resolution, some important solutions were identified as important and highlighted.

The report concentrates on the solutions. It is not exhaustive, but focuses on some key issues which constitute the conclusions from the seminar.

Focal point

Promoting inclusion of disabled people in to the development agenda in order to accomplish disability mainstreaming in the long run, requires a targeted and concrete strategy. However, most important is the continuous work in order to reach out to all ongoing political and administrative processes.

An overall conclusion coming from the seminar was; if the responsibility for the inclusion of persons with disabilities is not located within one office designated for this responsibility, the attention to the issue is most likely to crumble.

In order to secure a continuous focus and follow-up of disabled people's needs in development, the most efficient way to ensure this is to make sure that there is a focal point in every country and within foreign ministries or development agencies.

The focal point can be either a resource office or even a single responsible employee with competence on disability and how to advocate for this cause and ensure inclusion in general development policy.

One challenge is where to locate the focal point. For countries with separate development aid agencies, it could be located inside the agency. Some countries have placed it within the Ministry of Gender and equality or even in an independent office.

The focal point might have a coordinating role among development organizations, practitioners, policy makers and political representatives. Furthermore, it might serve as a helpdesk for anyone who needs guidance in relation to disability issues in the context of development.

Finally, the focal point can also be a place which offers training in disability inclusion. One topic could be how and in which way people with disabilities might be included in a development project, program or sector oriented development assistance. The training offered should also include ways to measure and monitor the inclusion mechanisms.

Visibility through statistics

People with disabilities constitute a huge proportion of the poorest population on a global scale. However, there is a breach between the overall agreed aim to target the poorest of the poorest in developing countries and the low amount of people with disabilities who have experienced progress through development aid. This breach might be due to negative attitudes towards people with disabilities, misconception of what it means to be a person with disabilities and/or the invisibility of people with disabilities in the society. Finally, it might be due to lack of attention by the development practitioner. Lack of statistics is often used as an excuse for not including persons with disabilities in development programs, as for example in the MDG programs, as progress cannot be measured. To highlight people with disabilities accurate statistics must be produced, analyzed and distributed among recipients, donors and high level policy makers.

Statistics will enable the development programs to establish a baseline and thereby be able to monitor and evaluate the programs or projects.

Good practices and sharing of information

One of the main findings from the discussions was a need for gathering and organizing good practices which we can learn from and be inspired by. There are many good examples where people with disabilities have been included in mainstreaming projects and thereby been granted the opportunities they are rightfully entitled to.

In order to select and acknowledge good practices, we need to have some guiding principles which assure quality:

- ➢ There should be a reference to the CRPD
- ➢ They should be well documented and linked to monitoring and evaluation
- ➢ They should be result based

One obstacle to achieve mainstreaming of people with disabilities is the lack of information about *how to* and *who* to contact. Sufficient information exists in organizations or with resource persons, but it is difficult to retrieve. In order to overcome the information barrier the seminar requested *one* generator of information which is accessible to everyone.

Yet no institution or agency has volunteered to take responsibility for the collection of best practices and find a way to publish it in an accessible manner. We call upon stakeholders to volunteer for this task.

Internal awareness and knowledge programs

The organizations and agencies present found that there is a lack of internal awareness and knowledge of disability issues in administrations and institutions. There is a need for human resource development and management.

Awareness and knowledge programs are available. Agencies like USAID and UNICEF have implemented such programs and are ready to share these with other interested institutions.

Moreover it was recognized that multinational companies, businesses and employers need knowledge about the CRPD and the implications on national laws if the CRPD is implemented.

Empowerment of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs)

CRPD acknowledges DPOs as the advocates of people with disabilities, and that they must be consulted in matters relating to disability and development. Partners in development should therefore routinely cooperate with DPOs. DPOs should on their side, take advantage of their potential role as policy providers. Firstly, the DPOs must increase their participation in decision making bodies on both national and international level. This implies a strengthening of the capacities within the DPOs.

Secondly, both national and international DPOs acknowledge that their current networks and alliances are limited. There is a need to *know how* to approach potential partners and allies. Such empowerment would imply internal training on how to lobby for their cause as well as how to build

alliances with other NGOs and stakeholders. The DPOs stated that an active role would need funding.

Guidelines

The seminar acknowledged the need for guidelines on how to achieve mainstreaming of people with disabilities, included how to cooperate with DPOs. Guidelines should be available in all countries and especially within development agencies. The guidelines should serve as a tool to ease the implementation of policies.

These are some examples of guidelines which already exist:

➢ "Development for All – Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009-2014" http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pdf/dev-for-all.pdf

➢ "Human Rights for Persons with Disabilities – Sida's plan for work" http://sidapublications.citat.se/interface/stream/mabstream.asp?filetype=1&orderlistmainid=294&printfileid=294&filex=402323664960
➢ "Including the rights of persons with disabilities in United Nations programming at country level - A guidance note for United Nations Country Teams and implementing partners." (United Nations Development Group / Inter-agency Support Group for the CRPD Task Team) http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/disabilityguidancenote.pdf

Pool of experts

Recognizing that there is a need for more knowledge about people with disabilities and how they can be included in development work, we need to know where to turn in order to find comprehensive information and knowledge.

Gathering a pool of experts which is competent in this field might be of use to the development practitioners as well as to other counterparts. The pool of experts should contain representatives from all spheres and all sectors. This includes representatives from Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs), national development agencies, UN agencies, employers' organizations, trade unions, multilateral NGOs, and researchers. Moreover we need technical experts, engineers, agriculture and livelihood practitioners, environmental experts, economists and teachers. In order to obtain a comprehensive pool of experts the representatives must have a background from both developing and developed countries.

The experts should be able to offer their assistance through a review of development policy or project proposals. In this way development advisors can increase their sensitivity in relation to disabled people in development cooperation.

The list of experts should be fully accessible to everyone.

Concrete commitments from the attendees:

> ➤ Leonard Cheshire Foundation will set up an e-mail list serve to share information on agriculture and disability mainstreaming.

Entry points

Participation in decision making for development programmes can only be done if the process is transparent, predictable and institutions are held to account for appropriate participation by people affected by the programme. This is just as much a question of governance and legitimacy, as of mainstreaming disability issues. A human rights based approach would mean identifying the state as the duty bearer obliged to initiate the development programme, and ensure participation at all stages of the programme cycle. Development agencies supporting the programme, are expected to verify that participation is ensured and bring this up in the development dialogue. According to the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the responsible for such participation is not only the duty bearing state, but also international partners and civil society. This is both an opportunity and a risk; since there are several types of organizations involved, a greater pressure and focus can be exercised. The risk may be that the accountability may get confused.

Enabling entry points for participation is primarily the responsibility of the authorities in the country where the programme takes place. The CRPD gives the development partners a responsibility to hold them accountable.

UN High level meeting 2012

The upcoming UN high level meeting in 2012 was highlighted by Ms. Akiko Ito, Chief of UN DESA Secretariat, who informed the seminar about the UN GA resolution 65/186 which states the following:

> "(..)To submit information on the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, with a view to convening, within existing resources, a high-level meeting at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly on strengthening efforts to ensure accessibility for and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of development efforts;(..)"

She welcomed cooperation with the DPOs towards the upcoming high level meeting in regard to mobilize for a broad participation of high level representatives. Furthermore she encouraged the representatives present to contact their governments and delegations to advocate for a high level attendance at the meeting.

This is an opportunity for DPOs as well as international organizations, OHCHR and agencies to lift the persons with disabilities high up on the political agenda of the states. The participants recognized that the organizations that they represented have an overall responsibility to make this high level meeting important and meaningful.

This requires that all DPOs make a plan of how they will influence the national delegations prior to the meeting.

International Disability Alliance (IDA) has committed themselves to coordinate the contributions towards the high level meeting from the DPOs.

Mainstreaming Disability in OECD

The OECD/DAC (OECD Development Assistance Committee) includes several subsidiary networks designed to find common ground between development agencies and ministries within the areas of e.g. pro-poor growth, good governance, gender equality, environment and poverty These networks and under them the Task Teams serve as vehicles to highlight emerging issues and to establish joint policy positions for High Level Meetings of the Member States. Disability rights have previously been almost totally absent from the work of the OECD-DAC, with the exception of some ad hoc work by the GOVNET, POVNET and GENDERNET. The representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Finland encouraged the Disability and Development community to lobby also the OECD-DAC to put disability rights onto the development agenda.

Mainstreaming Disability in RiO +20

The representative of Finland informed the participants about the key role played by President of Finland in the preparation of the Agenda for the Rio+20 Summit on Sustainable Development 4-6 June, 2012. In most countries the Rio-Agenda is dealt with mainly by the environmental authorities. However, as emphasized by President of Finland, the original 'Brundtland Commission' and the Rio-1992 Agenda introduced sustainable development as development where the social, economic and environmental dimensions are in a good balance. "Society for All" is one of the key principles of the social dimension of sustainable development. For development to be sustainable it has to be inclusive - for all, including for persons with disabilities. The representative of Finland encouraged the Disability and Development community to take an active role in their countries – and internationally – in the preparatory process leading to the Rio+20 Summit 4-6 June, 2012. Interested partners are welcome to propose ideas and language – through timo.voipio@formin.fi - to the Report of the High Level Panel on Global Sustainability, co-chaired by Presidents of Finland and South Africa, see: http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/pages/gsp

EFA Initiative Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities
Meeting 20 may 2011, Unesco HQ, Paris

Research suggests that disability overrules other factors that contribute to marginalisation and exclusion in education, such as gender, ethnicity, rural residence and socio-economic status. The combination of risk factors call for multidimensional and intensified actions, e.g. in the case of girls and women with disabilities who live in poverty.

The continued marginalisation of persons with disabilities in all levels of education will seriously hinder reaching the EFA targets and MDGs. More coordination and joint efforts are needed to include a more detailed report on the educational situation of persons with disabilities in every annual EFA Global Monitoring Report.

MDG and the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness

The conference again draw attention to UN Resolution 65/186, which urges member states to mainstream disability issues and persons with disabilities in national plans and tools designed to contribute to the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

The resolution confirms that member states must ensure practical steps to be taken in order to include persons with disabilities in programmes eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, universal primary education, gender equality, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other disease, ensuring environmental sustainability are inclusive of persons with disabilities.

The main challenge and obstacle agreed to be lack of understanding of the relevance of disability in a poverty context.

The fourth high level forum on Aid Effectiveness calls for advocacy. It will take place in Busan in Korea in November 2011, and follows earlier conferences in Rome, Paris and Accra. The aim of the forum is i.a. to gain broad acceptance that people, no matter how impoverished, must be empowered to participate directly in the development process. Disability was included in the Accra declaration. US Aid and Global Partnership for Disability and Development will work towards this forum, with others.

Conference on Disability in Conflicts and Emergencies "Reaching the most vulnerable" - Organized by the Atlas Alliance (Norwegian disability organization) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 30–31 May 2011 Oslo, Norway

According to the Red Cross and Red Crescent's World Disasters Report 2007, disabled people are frequently excluded from emergency operations. "Persons with disabilities are doubly vulnerable to disasters, both on account of impairments and poverty; yet they are often ignored or excluded at all levels of disaster preparedness, mitigation and intervention."

The Atlas Alliance, in cooperation with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, arranged a two-day international conference in Oslo on 30 and 31 May 2011. The key issue addressed by the conference was how we can ensure that disabled people are included in the emergency response when a crisis occurs.

Other remarks

Following the ideas emerging in the discussions, possible practical steps by Norad may include;

- ➢ Consider joining DAC/Povnet to raise awareness on Disability together with Finland
- ➢ Prepare for High-level conferences on Aid Effectiveness and MDGs together with other development agencies
- ➢ Contribute to capacity-building of DPOs through facilitating contact with Human Rights Defenders
- ➢ Approach Statistics Norway for national statistics on disability
- ➢ Join initiatives towards field offices and embassies for coordinated efforts between bilateral agencies (SIDA and AusAid) and UNDP for country level engagement

- ➢ Dialogue with mainstream civil society for inclusion of disability issues
- ➢ Take contact with Association of Trade Unions (LO) and explore opportunities for cooperation in the area of disability and employment.
- ➢ Strengthening ties with units experienced in Gender Rights and Rights of the Child.

Concluding remarks

Recognizing that disability mainstreaming is an issue which is competing with other interest groups in order to obtain political interest, we need to realize that this is a struggle of power. This means that we as stakeholders must target the political forums where we can raise interest and build political incentives for a prioritization of people with disabilities. One of the entry points recognized is to target institutions at country level in developing countries. For national aid agencies the most accurate way to promote the issue of disability is through the embassies in developing countries. They have both a better picture of what moves on the ground in the country, as well as they possess decision making authority in regards to aid allocation.

Global Partnership for Disability and Development (GPDD)
- Second Development Partners Forum in person meeting

The Development Partners Forum (DPF) is an informal network of representatives and disability focal points from government donor agencies, United Nations agencies, multilateral organizations, and private foundations. It was established as an outcome of the "International Development Partners Forum on Disability and Development" organized by GPDD which took place at the World Bank Offices in Brussels, Belgium on September 15-16, 2010.

The DPF had a meeting on March 30 in Oslo. At the meeting the following task groups were formed:

1) Practical ways to mainstream
2) High level advocacy towards 2011 and 2012
3) Common country level approaches and awareness in embassies/field offices

More information

The main discussions in the seminar were undertaken in working groups. The detailed analysis and recommendations from these discussions are not included in this report. For more information about the outcome of the working group discussions, please view the *reports from the working groups* enclosed.

Enclosures[1]:
1. Examples of good practices
2. Mandate of the working groups
3. Reports from the working groups
4. List of participants

Oslo, May 31th 2011

Ann-Marit Sæbønes/Gisle Hagen

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[1] In addition to these enclosures, please see previously distributed presentations, speeches and notes which were presented during the seminar. Copies are available, please contact annmaritsabones@gmail.com

Examples of good practices and call for action:

Following are some of the examples of good practices which were brought up by the seminar. (You will find more in the reports from the sessions)

1. In Tanzania the DPOs and the government have developed a national disability mainstreaming strategy which was led by the DPOs. The Government has taken ownership and pledges prioritization of strategy in development cooperation. Partners also pledge support.
2. In Australia they have launched "Development for all" – towards a disability inclusive Australian Aid Programme 2009-2014. This programme demanded political will, organizational change and sufficient financial resources. Donor partners are part of its reference group.
   AusAid has also had a good experience with direct support to regional DPO coalitions.
3. In Finland they have emphasized a strong empowerment of Finnish DPOs to empower partner country DPOs.
4. In Germany they did an initiative towards the PRSPs; *"How to make PRSPs Disability Inclusive?"* This initiative had good political support.
5. In Sweden they did a Disability Action Plan and baseline study.
6. In USAID they did a high level policy dialogue on mainstreaming disability with Hillary Clinton on board.
7. In Ethiopia they released a new mission statement of ministries; all ministries are responsible for including people with disabilities. There is also a new legislation in regards to accessible construction. Finally, National Transformation and Growth Plan commit to increase enrollment in inclusive education from 41.000 children with disabilities to 1, 7 million children with in 5 years.
8. Awareness and knowledge programs are available. Agencies like USAID and UNICEF have implemented such programs and are ready to share these with other interested institutions
9. Leonard Cheshire Foundation will set up an e-mail list serve to share information on agriculture and disability mainstreaming.
10. International Disability Alliance (IDA) has committed themselves to coordinate the contributions towards the high level meeting from the DPOs.
11. Finland has offered to coordinate inputs to the Agenda for the RIO+20 summit 2012. Timo.voipo@formin.fi
12. Yet no institution or agency has volunteered to take responsibility for the collection of best practices and find a way to publish it in an accessible manner. We call upon stakeholders to volunteer for this task

These are some examples of guidelines which already exist:

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➢ "Human Rights for Persons with Disabilities – Sida's plan for work" http://sidapublications.citat.se/interface/stream/mabstream.asp?filetype=1&orderlistmainid=294&printfileid=294&filex=402323664960

➢ "Including the rights of persons with disabilities in United Nations programming at country level - A guidance note for United Nations Country Teams and implementing partners."

(United Nations Development Group / Inter-agency Support Group for the CRPD Task Team)
http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/disabilityguidancenote.pdf