

part B

DISABILITY INCLUSION: LIVELIHOOD

“I believe that women with disability who have a job to do and have good training don’t get depressed or feel hopeless in their life.”¹

Key facts

- ▶ People with a disability in developing countries experience greater poverty than those without a disability.
- ▶ The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that 386 million people of working age have a disability, with unemployment among people with a disability as high as 80 per cent in many countries.²
- ▶ Lack of access to funds is a major obstacle for establishing a business especially for people with a disability.³
- ▶ Many potential lenders incorrectly perceive people with a disability to be a high risk for loans.⁴
- ▶ Article 27 of the CRPD highlights the importance of work and employment, which should be freely chosen in a work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to people with a disability.⁵
- ▶ People with a disability are more likely to be economically disadvantaged than people without a disability.⁶
- ▶ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) Article 23 (1) affirms that everyone has the right to work, have free choice in employment and to be protected from unemployment.⁷
- ▶ Lower rates of labour market participation among people with a disability significantly impacts the link between disability and poverty.⁸
- ▶ There is a strong correlation between disability and poverty with poverty leading to higher rates of disability and disability increasing the risk of poverty.⁹

“When we have money they call us by our names, not our disabilities.”¹⁰

Reasons for disability inclusion in livelihood programs

- ▶ Access to livelihood opportunities is fundamental to ending the cycle of poverty and disability. In recognition of this, skills development and economic empowerment need to be encouraged for people with a disability.
- ▶ People with a disability can experience numerous barriers including negative attitudes, lack of access to training, information and inaccessible work places when seeking employment. Livelihood programs that are disability inclusive can play a valuable role in addressing these barriers.
- ▶ The CRPD, in particular Article 27, promotes a “right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to people with [a disability].”¹¹
- ▶ People with a disability may not be able to access small loans or other financial support to start a business and therefore need explicit consideration in microfinance initiatives.¹²
- ▶ As employers do not always recognise the capabilities and breadth of experience people with a disability can bring to the workplace, strengths and capacity of people with a disability need to be valued and developed.¹³
- ▶ There are many successful examples that highlight the contribution people with a disability make to the workforce and local economies.
- ▶ The economic empowerment of people with a disability is the key to independent living and social participation.¹⁴
- ▶ Livelihood initiatives encourage opportunities to end the cycle of poverty and disability and also contribute towards poverty reduction and inclusion of people with a disability in their local community.
- ▶ Many mainstream micro finance programs are not inclusive of people with a disability due to restrictive entry requirements related to education, skills and collateral. Livelihood programs are encouraged to address such barriers and promote disability inclusive, equitable self-employment and work opportunities.

“Before I lost my hand, I felt like everybody else. People didn’t look down on me. But when I became a person with disability, I felt ashamed because I couldn’t participate with other people in the friendly way; I felt hopeless and I didn’t know what I should do to make money to support my kids. People said I was like a person who has no ability to do anything at all. They called me names by my disability, not my real name.”¹⁵

How to include people with a disability in livelihood programs

It is important to support the inclusion of people with a disability in all livelihood approaches, including formal employment, income generation projects, skills development and access to loans and financial services.

The following principles, which adhere to a human-rights approach to disability are used to demonstrate inclusion of people with a disability in all development programs and sectors.

Awareness of disability and its implications.

Participation and active involvement of people with a disability.

Comprehensive accessibility through addressing physical, communication, policy and attitudinal barriers.

Twin track identifying disability specific actions combined with

Awareness

- ▶ Identify the number of people with a disability within the community. This information can be gathered, for example, through meeting local people with a disability and DPOs, census data, household surveys, Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) and disability services and facilities for inclusive education.
- ▶ Promote the unique strengths and capacity of people with a disability in livelihood and employment opportunities by highlighting their valuable contribution.
- ▶ Connect with CBR programs to increase access to livelihood and training opportunities and improve linkages to other sectors.
- ▶ Advocate for the rights of people with a disability to have full access to livelihoods as the cycle of poverty and disability will not end without access to income earning opportunities.
- ▶ Educate the community about disability including the rights of people with a disability to access income-generation and employment opportunities.

“My role is a receptionist to answer the telephone, and even do the photocopying and serve people when they come in and ask for help. I feel happy and excited that I have a job.”¹⁶

Participation

- ▶ Connect with private and public sector employers associations, trade unions and government representatives in stakeholders committees to explore employment opportunities for people with a disability.
- ▶ Engage with families, community groups, CSOs, faith-based organisations and local government to support the active involvement of people with a disability in training, employment and micro-finance opportunities.
- ▶ Consult with people with a disability and DPOs at key stages of the project including program design and evaluation.
- ▶ Invite people with a disability to participate on a reference or steering committee.

- ▶ Explore opportunities for employment of someone with a disability within the program.
- ▶ Identify local DPOs and consider working in partnership with them.
- ▶ Employ people with a disability to work within the project as people with a disability are important role models, resource and change agents for the community.
- ▶ Identify opportunities to promote good practice examples of inclusion of people with a disability in employment and livelihood activities.

“Before, I did nothing, and my Mum and Dad would always wonder what I would do in my future ... I stayed lonely because I had nothing to do, because I’m deaf ... At the end of this year, I will have completed my four years [livelihood] training and I will go home and look for a job ... working in the garden in agriculture, or in poultry-raising. With my training, I will go back and help my family and myself.”¹⁷

Comprehensive accessibility

Comprehensive accessibility = physical, communication, policy and attitudinal access

- ▶ Be prepared to source alternative communication options including large print, Braille, pictorial, audio and sign language based on individual requirements. These may be arranged through local partners, inclusive education services, CBR and disability organisations.
- ▶ Address social discrimination and stigma attached to the capacity of people with a disability; in particular, challenge perceptions that people with a disability are either unable to work or cannot be accommodated in the workplace.
- ▶ Highlight a socially inclusive approach to disability in order to dispel the charitable approach towards disability as this has been an obstacle in economic empowerment.

- ▶ Highlight successful examples of NGO and DPO lobbying for legislation on disability and employment as can be seen in the public sector in some developing countries.
- ▶ Focus on enforcement of legislation where there is a quota for employment of people with a disability.
- ▶ Lobby for laws and policies to be inclusive of people with a disability in both training and employment opportunities
- ▶ Work towards ratification and implementation of the CRPD, especially in measures to respond to Article 27 on work and employment.
- ▶ Identify the preferred communication mode for individuals with a disability. Note that not all people who are blind will have been taught Braille, likewise, not all individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing will have sign language skills.
- ▶ Be prepared to source alternative communication options including large print, Braille, pictorial, audio and sign language based on individual requirements. These may be arranged through local partners, inclusive education services, CBR and disability organisations.
- ▶ Work with local DPOs to address accessibility barriers.
- ▶ Address physical barriers in transport, workplaces, vocational training settings and microfinance institutions.
- ▶ Hold consultations and other meetings in physically accessible venues.
- ▶ Ensure that written communication is accessible to people with a disability using large print, Braille, plain language, pictorial and audio formats.
- ▶ Use sign language interpreters where required for meetings and consultations that involve people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- ▶ Enable access to assistive devices and technologies to ensure people with a disability can participate in employment and livelihood opportunities.
- ▶ Identify and address travel barriers including terrain and public transport that may inhibit participation in livelihood activities.
- ▶ Consider relevant laws and policies and identify whether they assist or detract from the project and what actions can be taken to improve laws and policy through harnessing DPO advocacy efforts.
- ▶ Include a budget for disability inclusion in all livelihood programs.
- ▶ Use local stories highlighting the positive contribution to livelihoods made by people with a disability in order to change negative attitudes and perceptions.

Twin track

Twin track enables full inclusion through mainstream access working alongside disability specific supports

Mainstream	Disability specific
<p>Include people with a disability in community microfinance programs as access to credit for people with a disability is particularly difficult.</p> <p>Advocate to ensure people with a disability are included in peer savings programs or self help groups.</p> <p>Advocate for laws and policies to reflect disability inclusion in employment and finance schemes.</p> <p>Work with DPOs in advocacy for mainstream inclusion in livelihood programs.</p> <p>Encourage person-first thinking so that people with a disability are recognised for their skills, abilities and interests in their overall contribution to livelihood activities.</p> <p>Identify data on disability including age and gender within general data collection mechanisms.</p> <p>Promote formal employment in public and private sector through educating and lobbying potential employers.</p>	<p>Promote successful examples of people with a disability in further education and employment.</p> <p>Facilitate access to training for people with a disability as they have not always had equal access to education.</p> <p>Address skill development of people with a disability in relation to finance and trade.</p> <p>Identify livelihood strategies for people with a disability that have worked well in the past.</p> <p>Tailor livelihood programs as there is no one-size-fits-all approach, and stereotyping of roles for people from particular disability groups does not always take into consideration individual skills and abilities.</p> <p>Facilitate access to specialist equipment/devices that will enable people with a disability to participate in employment opportunities.</p> <p>Create opportunities for women with a disability as women are more likely to spend money on family and household items.</p>

CASE STUDY: IMPROVING SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

CARE Lao PDR

Through a two-year AusAID-funded program, CARE has worked with staff, partners, government and people with a disability and their families located in remote, rural communities in Laos to improve socio-economic support for people with a disability.

Research

In year 1, a small Participatory Action Research study was undertaken on *Socio-Cultural Attitudes towards People with Disabilities and Key Obstacles to Accessing Rehabilitation Services*. This research had a focus on disability as it related to gender, access to services and transportation. The study visited three villages in Lamam and Dak Cheung Districts, Sekong Province. The research identified that communities had little understanding of the nature and causes of disabilities and people with a disability had little knowledge of their disability or relevant services. This led to finding that in remote areas, people have poor access to information on disability and rights; there is low incidence of disability change mainstreaming; and there are inadequate support services existing for improvement of life outcomes. The vast majority of people with a disability in the program area are unable to reach their potential, remain dependent on families for support and are denied the opportunity to contribute to the country's development.

Mainstreaming training

CARE staff and partners received training in disability mainstreaming with a focus on vocational training/employment, with guidelines developed in partnership with Lao Disabled People's Association (LDPA). Key messages from the guidelines included:

- ▶ Management support is essential.
- ▶ Hire people with a disability and DPOs as accessibility and anti-discrimination consultants.
- ▶ Remember that accessibility is not just about physical access; it is also about ensuring that people with a disability are not discriminated against in any way, either passively (e.g. through lack of information) or actively (e.g. through abuse by other employees or volunteers).
- ▶ Address gender: look at whether policies and processes discriminate against women.
- ▶ Take small steps: make steady progress with simple, cost-effective adjustments and don't expect to change everything at once.
- ▶ Adapt the office, not the person.

Checklist for disability inclusion in livelihood programs

- Have awareness-raising activities about the potential of people with a disability been delivered?
- Is data being collected on people from different disability groups for advocacy and program-monitoring purposes?
- Is there budget allocation to cover participation expenses and attendance time for consultations with people with a disability and DPOs?
- Are disability measures included in design for budgeting and measurement purposes?
- Have local laws and policies been checked and challenged for disability inclusion?
- Have local initiatives such as awards for most disability-inclusive microfinance institution been developed and celebrated?
- Have local communities been surveyed to determine accurate numbers of people with a disability, including disability type, age and gender?
- Are DPOs actively engaged throughout all stages of the livelihood program?
- Have access barriers been addressed for people with a disability?
- Does the project budget include a line item for disability-related access measures including adaptive devices and assistive technologies?
- Have training opportunities been identified to skill people with a disability to be ready for livelihood and employment opportunities?
- Are people with a disability benefiting equally from the program?
- Has the program focused on abilities and the contribution potential of people with a disability?
- Are people with a disability playing an active role in program planning and evaluation?
- Are alternative communication options available based on individual requirements?
- Are people with a disability more visible and active in their community as a result of the livelihood program?
- Are success stories being promoted of people with a disability in livelihood opportunities?
- Are women with a disability actively involved and benefiting from the program?
- Has organisation and co-worker training occurred to prepare a work place for a staff member with a disability?



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Useful resources for disability inclusion in livelihood programs

Vision for Sustainable Supported Employment. (2011). Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs [Advisory Group: Vision for Sustainable Supported Employment]:

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/pubs/policy/Pages/disability_employment.aspx

Training and Assessing Workbook: A resource for team leaders training and assessing supported employees in Disability Employment Services. (2008). Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs:

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/pubs/Documents/ConsumerTrainingSupportProducts/trainers/training_and_assessing/default.htm

Inclusion Melbourne: <http://inclusionmelbourne.org.au/disability-employment>

The Center on Human Policy, Law, and Disability Studies. 'Employment': <http://disabilitystudies.syr.edu/resources/employment.aspx>

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