

IDDC contribution to the ECs Public Consultation on Global Budget Support

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Introduction

[The International Disability and Development Consortium](#) is a network of 23 organisations, working to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream development. This paper outlines the recommendations of the IDDC to the EU on the issue of Global Budget Support (GBS), with some reference to Sector Budget Support (SBS). The IDDC welcomes the public consultation undertaken by the EC and is willing to assist the EC and EU member states in any actions they undertake to make GBS and SBS inclusive, in line with the EUs commitment to Inclusive Development under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The ECs commitments to Inclusive Development

The EC, as a signatory to the CRPD, must ensure the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in its development cooperation, in accordance with article 32 and article 28 (2)(b). Implications of these articles include that no international cooperation should contribute to create new barriers to the full enjoyment of human rights by people with disabilities, and to ensure that social protection and poverty reduction programmes include or target people with disabilities.

The EU must also ensure that its engagement with developing countries follows previous relevant commitments (in the treaties, and in the Cotonou and other agreements) to human rights, non-discrimination and civil society participation. In the case of persons with disabilities, the EU should be guided in implementing those commitments, by the general principles and obligations of the CRPD. Of particular importance in this regard is article 4.paragraph 3 which specifies the obligation to include persons with disabilities or their representative organizations in the development of all policies and decision-making processes that concern them.

In line with its commitments in the recently published European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (COM (2010) 636 final) and its background documents, the EU should, through Budget Support where possible:

- 1) Support the national efforts of partner countries for the signature, ratification and implementation of the CRPD
- 2) Ensure that EU work with partner countries to ensure that their development policies and programmes are inclusive vis a vis persons with disabilities
- 3) Ensure that where deemed needed specific interventions are put in place specifically targeting persons with disabilities
- 4) Improve the mainstreaming of disability concerns across all areas of cooperation, including in Budget Support, by use of relevant indicators.

General Budget Support and Inclusive Development

Adults and children with disabilities experience discrimination and lack of access to basic social services globally. According to the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report 2008, one third of out of school children are children with disabilities. According to the CRPD and in line with the MDGs, children with disabilities have a right to go to school. Public services, including education, are supported through SBS and GBS. **If steps are taken to fully include persons with disabilities, GBS and SBS can serve as excellent tools to support government in reaching their commitments under the MDGs, and their human rights obligations under the CRPD.**

On a more general level GBS and SBS should follow the principle of “human rights budgeting”, which implies the development of public budgets on the basis of human rights obligations. In the context of persons with disabilities an ‘inclusive budgeting’ which ensures access to and inclusion of persons with disabilities to public services, is essential. This implies allocation of adequate budgets to support reasonable accommodations – CRPD Article 5 (3) - meant to remove barriers to inclusion and participation. Respective budgetary measures need to be an intrinsic part of GBS and SBS arrangements to ensure, that community services for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs (CRPD Article 19 (c)).

How could GBS and SBS better contribute to Inclusive Development?

The EC defines GBS as having 4 key components; we have organised our remaining recommendations according to these components:

Policy dialogue: making the process transparent and inclusive

Dialogue on GBS is largely restricted to donors and high-level government officials. Partly as a result, the dialogue rarely focuses on the improvement of equitable basic services. This might result in an even widening access gap, leaving out particular excluded groups such as persons with disabilities. Greater involvement of local civil society actors and parliaments would improve the design, implementation, inclusivity, and wider impact of GBS.

Since the EU and many of its partner countries have signed the UN CRPD, it is legitimate to include the ratification and implementation of the CRPD within policy dialogue. This would enable to topic of access to services for persons with disabilities to be formally addressed by the EU with partners; furthermore, the CRPD stresses on the obligation to engage with people with disabilities and their representative organisations (DPOs) in all policy dialogue including dialogue on International Cooperation. (Article 4.3, Article 32). In this regard the EU should:

- Open up policy dialogue to CSOs, including DPOs
- Policy discussions around development should be published
- Strengthen the role of Parliaments in development policy dialogue
- Commit a proportion of the finances allocated to GBS and SBS to support local CSOs who are working on budget tracking, and advocacy for Inclusive development.
- Publish GBS agreements and make them available to all relevant stakeholders.
- Engage policy dialogue between the EU and the concerned State on best modalities to ensure compliance with and enforcement of CRPD article 32 (obligations of the signatories donor state and receiver state to ensure that no financial support contributes to create barriers)

Financial transfers: contributing to inclusive development and achievement of the MDGs

The EU has recognised the importance of supporting inclusive development, as expressed in the EU position towards the MDG High Level Meeting in September 2010. Article 28 in the Outcome Document of the MDGs Summit also states: “We also recognize that policies and actions must focus on the poor and those living in the most vulnerable situations, including **persons with disabilities**, so that they benefit from progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In this respect there is a particular need to provide more equitable access to economic opportunities and social services.”

The court of auditors report on GBS (Special Report 10, 2008) highlighted that the choice of focal sectors for the EU to support does not reflect its commitments and priorities according to the MDGs. In cases where appropriate sectors have been

supported (such as Health) EU Delegations do not have the requisite expertise to engage in health policy dialogue. In addition the court of auditors highlight the shortfall in funding to the social sectors. In order for financial transfers to promote inclusive development the EU should:

- Support sectors which will promote the achievement of the MDGs, and increase the financial allocation to these sectors
- Link aid disbursement to human rights indicators
- Link aid disbursement to disability sensitive indicators in sectors where MDG achievement will depend on specific attention to persons with disabilities (such as the Education and Health Sectors). These indicators can serve as a proxy indicator of how far GBS has reached the poorest people.

Performance Assessment- assessing the capacity and monitoring the performance of all stakeholders

In order to be sure GBS supports inclusive development the following issues could be assessed:

- Do CSOs have the capacity to engage in policy dialogue? Do women's groups, child rights organisations, organisations of indigenous people, disabled peoples organisations, have the capacity to represent their own interests, and to engage in policy dialogue? Does the dialogue framework create an enabling environment for their participation?
- Does the Parliament have the capacity to scrutinise the development policy/ planning, the budget? Is the budget process open to Parliamentary (or even public) scrutiny?
- Does the government have the capacity to implement the UN CRPD? Does the government have the know-how to develop inclusive public services? Does the government have the capacity to trace public expenditure and data linked with the promotion of inclusive development?

Capacity building: for all stakeholders

Capacity building should focus on key stakeholders in development: Government at all levels, Parliaments, CSOs. The State is responsible for ensuring access to public services; however, there is always a role for CSOs, be that role in advocacy, research, service delivery, etc. In order to have functioning public sector, governments / donors must ensure that CSOs can grow to fulfil their roles in political dialogue, advocacy, research, service delivery to form a just and equitable society together with the State.

The EU Delegations also need to build their own internal capacity, as well as the capacity of partner governments, and parliaments, to implement inclusive GBS and SBS, and fulfil obligations under the CRPD.