



IDDC contribution to the Public Consultation on: The Green Paper on EU development policy in support of inclusive growth and sustainable development

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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. 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 growth and development inclusive in line with the EU's commitment to inclusive development under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) to which it is a party, and its implementation in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

Strengths of the European Union in development policy and Commitments on Inclusive Development

The European Union is a value-based Union of states that has given itself over the last decades an ever stronger set of human rights principles and obligations. At the international level, it has gained a strong reputation to promote, protect and fulfil human rights including in its relations with partner countries. The European Union is also a longstanding partner of many developing countries. The current re-thinking of its development framework should be firmly embedded in these traditions.

The Lisbon Treaty gives the EU's development cooperation a prominent place. It states that poverty eradication is at the heart of its development cooperation (Article 208). And the achievement of the MDGs is an important milestone in this respect. The Lisbon treaty also reconfirms a strong EU position on the principle of non-discrimination.

According to the World Bank, one in five of the poorest persons in the world is a person with a disability¹. 80% per cent of disabled people live in developing countries,² of which 82% live below the poverty line.³ People with disabilities belong to the most marginalised groups of the population. It is of vital importance for the EU to include the rights of persons with disabilities in all its development work. Without such a systematic inclusion, poverty reduction strategies, including the MDGs, cannot be achieved. Furthermore, the EU would not live up to the principles of the Lisbon Treaty, nor meet its commitment to the standards of the CRPD. For example, the CRPD calls for all EU development work to be in line with the commitments and obligations that come under

¹ 3 Elwan A. (1999) Poverty and Disability: A Survey of the Literature, World Bank: Washington D.C.

² UN: Some Facts about Persons with Disability, available at <http://www.un.org/disabilities/conventions/facts.shtml>

³ ILO (2009) Promoting the Employability and Employment of People with Disabilities through Effective Legislation: Fact Sheet; ILO: Geneva.

this Convention. In the context of development cooperation, this includes that no international cooperation should contribute to create new barriers to the full enjoyment of human rights by people with disabilities, social protection and poverty reduction programmes include or target people with disabilities (article 28.b) and persons with disabilities or their representative organizations should be included in the development of all policies and decision-making processes that concern them (article 4.3).

Increased attention to persons with disabilities by the EU is also supported by recent policy commitments that will guide the way to the achievement of the MDGs by 2015. Both the Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions (June 2010) and the outcome document of the UN High Level Summit in September 2010 recognise that efforts have to be strengthened to reach out to persons with disabilities across all MDG related actions for progress on MDGs to be inclusive and in some cases for the MDGs to be achieved.

Furthermore, the strength's of the EU's 2005 Consensus on Development should not be neglected. It underlines the multidimensional nature of poverty, emphasises the importance of investing in people alongside wealth creation and highlights a number of important cross-cutting issues including human rights.

Recommendations:

- The EU's development policy in support of inclusive and sustainable growth and development should be underscored by the EU's commitment to non-discrimination and the eradication of poverty (Lisbon Treaty).
- The EU's existing commitments to achieving the MDGs should be retained and marginalised groups, including people with disabilities, should be placed at the centre of development policies in line with the FAC conclusions June 2010.
- The EU should work to strengthen social protection mechanisms, in line with the FAC conclusions June 2010, and ensure they are inclusive of people with disabilities.
- As an important element to achieving the MDGs, the EU should support the development of national capacities for data collection and monitoring of the inclusion of disabled people in development programmes.
- The EU should implement its commitment to inclusive development through the implementation of the CRPD (EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020), which is key to the sustained inclusion of persons with disabilities in development policy and processes.

What is Inclusive Growth and what role for human rights and social protection?

The Green Paper identifies growth as one of the motors of development and poverty reduction. People need the opportunities and resources to invest in their lives and futures, and governments need sufficient returns on growth to invest in the necessary developments in their countries, including further growth and redistribution. However, growth does not necessarily reduce poverty. In fact, recent research has shown how three-quarters of the world's poorest people (around one billion) live in middle-income countries, compared with just 20 years ago when 93 per cent of the poorest people lived in low income countries. A more inclusive approach is needed to improve progress towards the MDGs and to ultimately deliver improvements in health and education for people, especially people with disabilities. Relying on growth as the driver of development ignores structural inequalities of exclusion, discrimination and vulnerability that are hard to redress without specific commitments and long term measures.

Both the ILO and the World Bank recommend efforts to include persons with disabilities on the basis not only of principle, but of the economic cost of exclusion. World Bank estimates the global annual cost of excluding persons with disabilities to be 1.37-1.94 trillion USD. Even in the UK economically active disabled people are twice as likely to be unemployed as non-disabled people⁴. In areas of Bangladesh, the employment rate of disabled people is less than a quarter of those without a disability.⁵ In addition to the brake this represents on the development agenda and the productive cycle, the World Bank draws particular attention to the economic implications in time and money of entire households when individuals with disabilities are excluded from the labour force. An ILO study pointed to macroeconomic losses of 3-4.6% of GDP in Asia and 3.1-7% in Africa because persons with disabilities are excluded from the workforce. This exclusion is not necessarily the result of lack of growth but “a combination of exclusion and productivity both of which can be combated with serious investments in human rights, social protection and decent work.”

The Green Paper does acknowledge that decent work and social protection are elements contributing to growth. The Green Paper should expand further on this. For instance, the European Report on Development 2010 “Social Protection for Inclusive Growth” (ERD) also points to social protection as one of the key missing elements in EU development policy: “Well-designed social protection can also contribute to growth. Social transfers and other social assistance can offer the productive assets the poor need to engage productively in the economy, and allow them to graduate from dependence...It offers a direct and simple means of redistributing some of the gains

⁴ UK Parliament Select Committee on Education and Employment. Ninth report 1999

⁵ Chowdhury J Disability and Chronic Poverty: An Empirical Study on Bangladesh. MPhil Thesis, Oxford University, 2005

from growth to those... - such as the elderly or disabled – who otherwise risk staying behind”.

Furthermore, the ERD underlines that social protection contributes not only to growth but to human rights and empowers the poorest: “Social protection can also be part of a strategy to empower the most vulnerable groups, tackling inequalities to make growth more inclusive... by offering direct and indirect benefits, social protection can turn vicious circles virtuous. It is also a right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Social protection programmes, properly designed and delivered, can be affordable in a range of social, demographic and economic conditions...” ERD 2010. In Brazil, Bolsa Familia reaches 26% of the population but costs less than half a GDP percentage point.⁶ Universal pension plans have been put in place for between 0.5% and 1.7% of GDP in Botswana, Mauritius and Nepal.

To conclude, achieving inclusive growth requires strong social protection mechanisms which must be accessible for all groups of people. Specifically, all Social Protection programmes should be designed in a way that includes people with disabilities (including those targeted at children and older people). This means involving people with disabilities in the design to discuss issues of access, and assessing impact on people with disabilities in M&E. It also means ensuring their inclusion in these programmes is established as a right, backed by EU legislation and policies establishing social protection programmes. Finally, it is essential to recognise that social assistance is only part of the solution - there must be a wider package of measures to support and empower people with disabilities, if inclusive growth is to be achieved.

Recommendations:

- The EU should draw on the recommendations from the European Report on Development 2010 and enhance and improve its support to social protection in developing countries and put in place a more comprehensive policy framework to achieve this.
- The EU should develop the definition and understanding of ‘Inclusive Growth’ in the Green paper to ensure marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, are an integral part of EU development.
- The EU should ensure its commitments on the MDGs (FAC Conclusions, June 2010), Decent work (Communication: Promoting Decent Work for All, May 2006) and Social Protection (FAC Conclusions June 2010, GAERC Conclusions June 2007 and human rights (CRPD and Disability Strategy, 2010 and European

⁶ European Report on Development, 2010, Chapter 4.2.1

Consensus on Development, 2005) in order to develop its position on and understanding of Inclusive Growth.

- The EU should include a focus on persons with disabilities as a cross-cutting issue in inclusive growth, decent work and social protection because of its existing commitments and because of the economic costs of not doing so.
- The EU should ensure people with disabilities and disabled people's organizations are included in planning and implementation of development policies and programmes, including social protection.