

16 March 2011

Briefing for the Social Affairs and Environment Committee of the EU-ACP JPA on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in international cooperation.

- **The need for inclusive development – a poverty reduction and MDGs perspective**

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Of the estimated 650 million persons with disabilities worldwide, over 80 per cent live in developing countries; according to UN statistics, 82 per cent still live below the poverty line.

MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education

Globally one third of children not in school are disabled. 98 per cent of disabled children in developing countries are not in school.

MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Women represent the world's probably largest minority group, and still face discrimination.

Disabled women are often subject to multiple discrimination – discrimination on account of gender and disability and other factors.

The Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction are the focus of EU development aid. They have the potential to make life better for billions of people in the world's poorest countries. Yet when they were established by world leaders in 2000 they did not account for one of the world's largest minority groups – persons with disabilities. According to UN statistics, people with disabilities comprise about 10 per cent of the world's population, and World Bank statistics point to the fact that people with disabilities make up more than 20 per cent of the poorest of the poor. This means that one in five of the world's poorest people are people with disabilities. The UN MDG Summit Outcome Document in September 2010 asked that further attention be paid to disability in efforts to achieve the MDGs, so that persons with disabilities will be less excluded from international and national poverty reduction plans. It drew on a UN resolution that stated : “the lack of data and information on disability and the situation of persons with disabilities at the national level contributes to the invisibility of persons with disabilities in official statistics, presenting an obstacle to achieving development planning and implementation that is inclusive of persons with disabilities”.

- **The need for inclusive development – a rights perspective**

The EU and ACP countries and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The UN [Convention on the Rights of Peoples with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#) sets the standard for full participation of persons with disabilities in economic, social, cultural and political life. The EU and 17 EU Member States are parties to this Convention. At least 29 ACP states have already ratified the Convention and many more are signatories. As such, the role of the JPA in encouraging its implementation in international cooperation needs to be shaped. The IDDC sees this as an opportunity for the JPA.

→ Inclusive International Cooperation (Article 32)

This article of the CRPD commits all parties to include disability in international cooperation. It helps to ensure both donor and partner governments address non-discrimination, equality, participation and accountability.

→ Inclusive Humanitarian Aid (Article 11)

Recognising the particular vulnerability of persons with disabilities in times of crisis, the CRPD also includes provisions on the inclusion of people with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies. Persons with disabilities often lack appropriate accessible information in times of crisis and emergency shelters often do not cater to their needs leaving them without shelter, water or suitable nutrition.

• IDDC recommendations for the JPA report on including persons with disabilities in international cooperation:

The report should:

- 1) call on all governments to adopt and implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and ask that the rights of persons with disabilities be raised in international fora;
- 2) ask that international cooperation in the context of EU-ACP relations support national efforts to realise the rights of persons with disabilities and especially that disability be systematically included in political and sector dialogues and that technical support to implementation of national plans be provided;
- 3) highlight the lack of an EU policy on inclusive development;
- 4) draw on the findings and recommendations of the [November 2010 European Commission study on disability in EC development cooperation](#)
- 5) insist on implementation and resources for the relevant sections of the EU [Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#);
- 6) highlight the importance of the political participation of persons with disabilities;
- 7) ensure appropriate attention be given to persons with all types of disabilities, including those related to physical, mental, intellectual and sensory impairments, and that appropriate attention be given also to gender issues including the connection between gender and disability ;
- 8) ask for monitoring of progress on the inclusion of disability;
- 9) promote research and documentation in the field of disability;
- 10) call for further efforts to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in emergency situations;
- 11) call for more support to Disabled People's Organisations and ensure access for persons with disabilities to all development processes;

12)ensure accessibility of all new infrastructure and equipment arising out of EU support to ACP states.

Further resources for Parliamentarians:

UN handbook on the CRPD for Parliamentarians:

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=212>

UN 'Enable' website:

www.un.org/disabilities

IDDC website

www.iddcconsortium.net

Study of Disability in EC Development Cooperation

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tanzania/documents/press_corner/20101201_01_en.pdf

EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020

More information on the Strategy and the list of items for implementation can be found at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=429>

IDDC is a network of 23 international NGOs¹ supporting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in development efforts in over 100 countries. The IDDC promotes **inclusive development**, i.e. respecting the full human rights of every person, acknowledging diversity, eradicating poverty and ensuring that all people are fully included and can actively participate in development processes.

¹ Action on Disability and Development (ADD), Associazione Italiana Amici di Raoul Follereau (AIFO), the Atlas Alliance, CBM, Dark and Light, Disabled Peoples Organisation - Denmark (DPOD), Dutch Coalition on Disability and Development (DCDD), EU-CORD, Finnish Disabled People's International Development Association (FIDIDA), Handicap International (HI), International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP), Leonard Cheshire Disability, LIGHT FOR THE WORLD, Liliane Fonds, Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD), Organismo di Volontariato per la Cooperazione Internazionale la Nostra Famiglia (OVCI), Platform Disability and Development Cooperation (PHOS), Save the Children UK, Sense International, Sightsavers International, Swedish Organisation of Disabled Persons International Aid Association (SHIA), The Leprosy Mission International (TLMI), Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), World Vision UK