

Recommendations for an inclusive partnership between Africa and the EU

This year, the current Roadmap of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) will come to an end. As discussions on the next Roadmap will start soon, the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) would like to share some recommendations that should be considered in the development of the new Roadmap.

OVERVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Given the references to the rights of persons with disabilities in both the JAES (paragraph 57 and 60) and the current Roadmap (paragraph 20), we expect the next Roadmap to also contain a reference to persons with disabilities. However, rather than just a reference we would recommend to **include disability as a cross-cutting issue** as part of the human rights framework, similar to youth and gender. This is in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the commitment in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind.
- The new Roadmap should include a commitment to collect **data disaggregated** by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other relevant characteristics, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This to ensure that the situation of the most excluded groups is monitored and their needs can be taken into account. This also means that the cooperation in the field of statistics as required in the JAES (point 48) should continue and that it should include exchange and support on how to collect disaggregated data.
- The new Roadmap should respond adequately to the needs of persons with disabilities by promoting **inclusive technical and vocational training (TVET)** and empower people to access to **decent work** and basic services as required by the strategy (point.55 and 57).
- The future Roadmap should be in line with the international framework and promote access to **social services such as health and inclusive education**. Furthermore, it should respond adequately to the needs of all human beings especially those who face multiple discrimination such as girls, women, indigenous people, migrants and refugees with disabilities.
- The new Roadmap should include a reference to **accessibility** and the importance of accessible infrastructures, facilities and services for those at risk such as men, women and children with disabilities, and older people in line with the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework and goals 1 and 11 of the 2030 Agenda.

- The future Roadmap should include a mechanism for the participation of **civil society**, including organisations representing persons with disabilities (DPOs). Persons with disabilities should be included in all aspects of the future partnership and at all stages of the programming cycle. This also means that all information should be made available in an accessible format.
- The new Roadmap should include an obligation for governments to include persons with disabilities in the development and implementation of national and local plans in the **disaster risk management cycle** and in all related monitoring and evaluation.

ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL COMMITMENTS TOWARDS INCLUSION

According to the 2011 World Report on Disability from the World Health Organisation (WHO), around 15%¹ of the world population experiences some form of disability and about 80 million are coming from Africa. They belong to the most marginalised, as an overwhelming majority lives below the poverty line and are confronted with discrimination and preconceptions. Disability is caused by many factors, including malnutrition and disease, environmental hazards, traffic and industrial accidents, civil conflict and war, and the ageing of the population. The number of people with disabilities continues to increase.

The current Roadmap 2014 - 2017 states clearly that “**we shall pay particular attention to gender equality, the rights of the most vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities**”.

IDDC believes that the next Roadmap should fully respect the principles of the UN charter and international law and in that sense also include all principles of a human rights based approach to development. It should build on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its leave no one behind principle, the New Urban Agenda, The Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Respecting the principles of the UN Charter also means to be fully in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) knowing that this UN convention has been ratified by most African countries and all but one EU member state. It is also the first and only UN Convention ratified by the European Union. To implement their commitments, the EU and the African countries that have ratified need to align their policies with the CRPD, which means that their international cooperation policy, including the JAES, should follow the lines of article 32 CRPD. This article contains a commitment to make all development programming fully inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities but also to facilitate capacity building of states within the framework of international cooperation. In addition, a specific UN CRPD Toolkit for Africa has been developed by UNDESA. This document provides practical tools on various disability - related issues and aims to support the implementation of the CRPD.

Furthermore, the European Disability Strategy² (2010-2020) contains a commitment to promote

¹ World Health Organisation & The World Bank (2011). World Report on Disability.

http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/

² European Commission (2010). European Disability Strategy (2010-2020)

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:en:PDF>

the rights of persons with disabilities at international level while the African Union (AU) has created a continental plan of action for the extended African decade of persons with disabilities (2010-2019)³.

Given all these different policies and commitment, the common will to promote and to protect the rights of persons with disabilities from both the EU and the AU can't be denied and therefore has to be reflected in the next Roadmap. It should be inclusive, accessible and have a human rights focus. IDDC believes that references to persons with disabilities must be strengthened and emphasised in the next Roadmap. We would recommend to avoid references to vulnerable groups, which fails to capture the different challenges persons with disabilities are confronted with but would suggest to focus more on the rights of persons with disabilities and specific solutions for social exclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT ROADMAP

IDDCs recommendations for the next Roadmap follow the 5 pillars of the current Roadmap: Peace and Security, Democratic good governance and human rights, human development, sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration, global and emerging issues. In line with the upcoming EU - Africa Heads of State and Government Summit in Ivory Coast in November 2017, we have added an extra paragraph to point out the need to pay particular attention to youth with disabilities.

Peace and Security

The current Roadmap highlight the needs to protect civilians in armed conflict. IDDC believes that the protection of civilians must remain a priority within the area of peace and security in order to implement and respect the Geneva Conventions. Special attention should be paid to those most at risk such as women, children, older people and persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities face greater risks of being caught in fighting and greater challenges in getting necessary humanitarian assistance. They are often left behind during attacks and find themselves at much greater risk of starvation or abuse. IDDC would recommend the new Roadmap to include the five key principles (non-discrimination, participation, inclusive policy, inclusive response and services, cooperation and coordination) of the Charter on Inclusion of persons with disabilities in Humanitarian Action⁴ developed in advance of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in 2016. All humanitarian action undertaken in the frame of the JAES should be inclusive of persons with disabilities. This means that all necessary steps should be taken to meet the essential needs of persons with disabilities and promote the protection, safety and respect for their dignity in situations of risk, including armed conflict. In

³ African Union(2010). Continental plan of action for the extended African decade of persons with disabilities (2010-2019)

<http://www.africadisabilityalliance.org/images/Programmes/ksrc/CPOA-2010-2019-jS-18-April-2013-FINAL1.pdf>

⁴ Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (2016)

<http://humanitariananddisabilitycharter.org/wp-content/themes/humanitarian-disability-charter.org/pdf/charter-on-inclusion-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-humanitarian-action.pdf>

addition, IDDC also calls for the next Roadmap to encourage both states and the African Union to endorse the 'Charter on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action' knowing that the European Union already took this step.

Democratic, good governance and human rights

IDDC appreciates the commitment in the 2014-2017 Roadmap to defend Human Rights in Africa and Europe and thereby paying particular attention to gender equality and the rights of the most vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities. We encourage the EU and the AU, to keep up this commitment in the next roadmap and to foresee concrete mechanisms for implementation. One good example would be the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in each AU - EU Human Rights Dialogue, thereby also looking back and evaluate the commitments made in the previous dialogue.

The current Roadmap 2014-2017 clearly states that this priority area includes economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights. IDDC believes this should remain the case in the next Roadmap, but it should be viewed in the framework of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). For IDDC this means that the rights of persons with disabilities should be mainstreamed throughout the Roadmap. When actions under the Roadmap for example deal with political participation, they should equally take into account the political participation of persons with disabilities, which are currently often left behind.

Finally, IDDC is happy that the JAES recognizes the key role of civil society. We believe that the next Roadmap has to clearly refer to the important role civil society organisations can play in policy processes, political dialogue, joint institutions and the development, implementation and monitoring of programmes. IDDC is strongly convinced that a clear mechanism should be defined for civil society to play an active role at all levels of the partnership. Such a mechanism should include several accessibility checks to make sure persons with disabilities and their representing organisations (DPOs) can participate. This also means that information should be accessible to all.

Human Development

If the Roadmap wants to reflect the JAES and implement the principles defined by the UN Charter and the international framework, it should support the collection and monitoring of reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, race, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, in line with the commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In order to collect data disaggregated by disability we would recommend to use the set of six questions developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics in every national census⁵. Further we would also encourage the AU and the EU to continue their cooperation in the field of statistics, as indicate in the JAES and the 2014-2017 Roadmap. IDDC would encourage the establishment of a

⁵ Washington Group, set of questions

<http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/washington-group-question-sets/>

mechanism to share good practices on the collection of data, including data disaggregated by income, gender, race, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other relevant characteristics.

IDDC further believes that one of the objectives of the next Roadmap should be the eradication of poverty, in line with the commitments under the 2030 Agenda. Eradicating poverty also means breaking the cycle of poverty and disability. This can only be done by promoting inclusive and accessible services, including health and inclusive education and TVET, knowing that inclusion can create economic gains at all levels, particularly in low-income countries.

In addition, IDDC believes that gender equality must be emphasised in the new Roadmap as a cross cutting issue, similar to the current Roadmap and the JAES. IDDC would also like to highlight the necessity to address double discrimination, especially for women and girls with disabilities. They are particularly at risk because they often face multiple discriminations: women and girls with disabilities are even less likely to attend school and are more vulnerable to gender-based violence.

Sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration

IDDC believes that poverty eradication must remain a priority of the future Roadmap. In that sense we are aware of the potential role private sector can play when it comes to economic development and job creation. However IDDC would like to point out that the future Roadmap needs to address private sector's responsibility to provide people with a genuine chance to lift themselves out of poverty. Equality of opportunity, without discrimination on any ground, is essential for ensuring sustainable and inclusive economic development. In order to eradicate poverty and to promote sustainable development it is fundamental to provide accessible and inclusive TVET and jobs to the most excluded such as persons with disabilities and in particular youth with disabilities.

IDDC would also like to point to the crucial role technology can play in breaking down barriers for persons with disabilities. Specific attention should therefore be paid to the development and dissemination of information and communication technologies, by providing affordable connectivity and wider access to digital applications for all, and the promotion of science and technology and research and innovation. This is also critical for economic investment and accelerated development. IDDC suggests to include accessible technology and access to digital applications for all as part of the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on science, technology and innovation.

Furthermore, in promoting a sustainable and inclusive development the next Roadmap should be in line with the New Urban Agenda, promoting access to all benefits and opportunities that cities can offer, and with Goal 11 of the SDGs, to make human cities and settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It is important in this sense to respect and implement the Universal Design Principles, making all buildings and services accessible to persons with disabilities.

Global and emerging issues

Climate change must be addressed as a priority in the new Roadmap in line with the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the SDGs. By promoting the implementation of the Sendai Framework we are promoting a people centered partnership, taking into account the rights and specific needs of persons with disabilities. This will reduce the existing risk and benefit a sustainable development.

Demography and emphasized the need to promote youth and especially youth with disabilities

The demographic dynamics is becoming one of the main challenge in Africa. IDDC believes that the empowerment of young people, including youth with disabilities, is fundamental.

It is crucial that all youth, including youth with disabilities are offered equal opportunities to participate in and contribute to society at all levels. IDDC therefore calls for the next roadmap to include disability as a cross-cutting issue in all priorities in order to ensure young people with disabilities can also take advantage of all opportunities offered by the JAES.

Further it is important that some specific actions are undertaken to reach young men and women with disabilities. Although very little data exists on young people with disabilities, which again indicates the need for the collection of disaggregated data, it is clear that they are amongst the most marginalised and poorest of the world's youth. They are routinely excluded from most educational, economic, social and cultural opportunities, and are often denied access to the labour market. For the inclusion of young people with disabilities and their right to an independent living, inclusive education and access to employment are essential. This can be promoted by providing them all the tools to become active at the labour market (thereby always taking into account the principles of decent work) and build a sustainable future. In this regard, inclusive education and technical and vocational training (TVET), in line with articles 24 (education) and 26 (work and employment) of the CRPD, are extremely important and should be supported in the next roadmap.

The international Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) is a global consortium of disability and development non-governmental organisations (NGOs), mainstream development NGOs and disabled people's organisations (DPOs) supporting disability and development work in more than 100 countries around the world.

The aim of IDDC is to promote inclusive development internationally, with a special focus on promoting the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by all persons with disabilities living in economically poor communities in lower and middle-income countries.

For more information about IDDC, please visit www.iddcconsortium.net/