

Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda



Goal 1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

DPI Position Paper on Disability and Poverty Eradication in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals

In keeping with the Millennium Development Goal to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; and,

Recognizing that persons with disabilities are affected by processes of impoverishment produced by barriers, attitudes and discrimination that limit their participation in society and reduce their capacity to compete; and combined with their lack of resources, these processes increase the cycle of poverty that every day violates human rights and produces exclusion and marginalization;

Recognizing that while attempts are made to compile accurate statistical evidence on different areas of disability, overall very little information and data on disability and poverty is available, particularly in developing countries;

Deploring the injustice done to persons with disabilities by their obvious exclusion from development processes and the Millennium Development Goals which prioritize poverty reduction in developing countries;

Believing that disability is a cause of poverty and that poverty often leads to disability;

Recognizing that persons with disabilities have their human rights violated on a daily bases, are among the poorest of the world's poor, are critically limited in educational opportunities, face significant barriers to employment and health care, are largely invisible in policies and programs, and experience significant social isolation;

Being highly cognizant of the negative impact the lack of simple aids and appliances can have on persons with disabilities;

Recognizing that persons with disabilities in rural areas of the world are further disabled and face greater isolation due to difficult natural terrain or inhospitable environment. While DPI is conscious of the problem created by an inhospitable natural environment, it objects strongly to the continued inaccessibility perpetrated by professionals in the manmade environment;

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Recognizing that unless persons with disabilities are included in development programs and poverty reduction strategies, not only will their current situations remain unchanged or probably worsen, with the increase in the world's population it will be impossible to eradicate poverty as the Millennium Development Goal 1 aspires to;

Stressing that the entry into force of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) placed a new priority on the international agenda – a large consensus to promote and guarantee to persons with disabilities an equal and non-discriminatory standard of living as afforded other citizens - appropriate implementation of the CRPD should positively impact in the fight against poverty;

Underlying the contribution of developing nations in the drafting of and ratification of, the CRPD and in particular Article 32 (International cooperation);

Acknowledging Decades on Persons with Disabilities which are in effect in Arab, Africa, Asia-Pacific and South America;

Recognizing that paid employment is the positive way in which to overcome the enormity of poverty globally, the extraordinarily high unemployment rate of persons with disabilities globally calls for positive action measures to improve this situation;

Acknowledging that the extra costs of disability-related supports need to be taken into consideration;

Stressing the need for United Nations and national development agencies and donors to increase the attention and funding to address the situation of persons with disabilities in developing countries; and,

Acknowledging the adoption of the International Labor Organization's R168 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Recommendation, 1983 and the ILO's C159 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983.

All these things being considered, DPI's position on the subject of persons with disabilities and poverty eradication is a statement of what DPI believes need to be carried out, in order that persons with disabilities are part of, and at the centre of, the solution.

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DPI recommends that:

1. As persons with disabilities are amongst the poorest of those in the poverty cycle, strategies be put in place to ensure that a minimum of 50% of that population are taken out of the poverty situation by 2020 and that all persons with disabilities in all countries are enabled to live in dignity.
2. Given the need for statistical evidence to emphasize the need to target persons with disabilities in development efforts, as well as to put particular emphasis on the multi-discrimination and marginalization to which women and girls with disabilities are subjected, a programme to provide accurate and gender disaggregated figures be developed.
3. All development aid specifically target persons with disabilities as beneficiaries of aid actions and be governed by the ethos of the UN CRPD and take this human rights approach to all development activities. Persons with disabilities should be at least equal, with other participants. Development activities should be partnerships between development agencies and the individual, and should ensure equal opportunities for participation, and equality of outcomes for persons with disabilities, in line with the outcomes for all other people.
4. All international, regional and national policies related to poverty eradication include persons with disabilities as a main target group.
5. Disabled people's organizations (DPOs) be encouraged and supported to become:
 - (a) Active and equal participants in national aid organizations in developed countries;
 - (b) Equal partners in programmes aimed at persons with disabilities in developing countries.
6. Donors, national agencies and other entities supporting and promoting development aid adopt a twin-track approach on disability and development, implement funds towards persons with disabilities, and include persons with disabilities in all projects.
7. All programmes, approaches etc., be governed by Universal Design criteria therefore making them accessible to all persons with disabilities, and particular attention be given to information and communication technologies (ICTs), easy read language, educational opportunities, man-made physical environments, etc.
8. Appropriate training on the CRPD of all development staff must be available from, and manly conducted by, DPOs and persons with disabilities.

In summary, DPI believes that persons with disabilities supported appropriately, are a critical part of the solution to combating poverty. By ensuring that poverty-reduction strategies have policies attached that respect and appropriately implement, the basic human rights of persons with disabilities, the World can take a giant step towards eradicating poverty.