1. Why Disability Inclusive Development?

- It affects 15% of population. More than 1 billion people worldwide have some form of disability; 80% of persons with disabilities live in developing countries. This number is expected to rise significantly due to factors such as aging population, war and conflict, and the impacts of climate change.
- Human capital and economic loss. Persons with disabilities consistently fare less well than their non-disabled peers. Exclusion and obstacles they face contribute to them having generally poorer health, lower education achievements, lower employment levels, and higher rates of poverty than persons without disabilities. Their exclusion from the labor market costs economies billions of dollars, estimated at 3-7% of lost GDP globally.
- Human dignity and safety. Dependency for water access increases the risks of sexual and financial exploitation. Women with disabilities tend to face high risk of domestic and sexual violence. Inability to independently access sanitation facilities harms privacy and self-esteem of persons with disabilities.
- Benefits for all. Making infrastructure accessible and safe benefits the whole community, including persons with disabilities, their families and caretakers, the elderly, families with small children, pregnant women or those experiencing temporary injuries.

Evidence from WASH Poverty Diagnostics

Applying The Washington Group Questions on Disability* can capture a severity of functional difficulties and aid in designing appropriate solutions. In the case of Tajikistan, the survey showed that 9% of households indicated that at least one household member had physical disabilities at the highest severity, and 54% of households reported they have one household member with disability; 24% of the 54% reported they have a member who is unable to access a water source without assistance, while 20% of households reported having someone unable to access sanitation. Nigeria WASH Poverty Diagnostic showed that only 6% of sanitation facilities in health centers are accessible for people with limited mobility. Around 51% of respondents believed that the needs of the disabled were not considered when building toilets.

2. What are the Barriers?

There is a range of challenges faced by persons with disabilities in access to water resources and services:
1. Natural (e.g. slippery, long, and unlit paths leading to a water point)
2. Infrastructural (e.g. steep steps, narrow entrance)
3. Institutional (e.g. lack of policies and regulations)
4. Social and Attitudinal (e.g. stigma linked to disability prevents people from participating in project consultations and voicing opinions)

*The Washington Group Questions on Disability

Lack of accurate disability data is a constant challenge. When conducting surveys and assessments, use the following questions to get a fuller picture of functional difficulties by type and severity.

6 QUESTIONS TO IDENTIFY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

1. Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?
2. Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?
3. Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?
4. Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?
5. Do you have difficulty (with self-care such as) washing all over or dressing?
6. Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?

Source: Washington Group on Disability Statistics

LEARN MORE:

For more information about how water operations can impact inclusion of persons with disabilities, refer to the Water GP’s Guidance Note on Including Persons with Disabilities in Water Sector Operations (the Guidance Note), World Bank, 2017
3. What Can Task Teams Do?
Tackle natural and infrastructural barriers — The natural and infrastructural barriers are among challenges that can be addressed through World Bank projects. Ideally, accessibility and adaptive devices/technologies are part of the original design. But when that is not possible, simple modifications to existing infrastructure can improve accessibility and help persons with disabilities gain independence. It’s the best to engage local disabled people’s organizations (DPOs) and seek their inputs and recommendations to make sure proposed adaptations are appropriate. (see The Accessibility and Safety Audit, in this page)
Tackle institutional, social, and attitudinal barriers — supportive policies and regulations can help to promote disability inclusive water facilities country-wide. Such laws and regulations would be added under existing laws on disability inclusion, universal access, water management, architectural standards, etc. (e.g. Chapter III. Accessibility, Peruvian General Law on Persons with Disabilities) Overcoming social and attitudinal barriers needs continuous interventions as these barriers are rooted in social and traditional perceptions of persons with disabilities.

4. Examples of Social Inclusion in Water

**Simple Technology**
The chairs with a hole were developed by the community in Nakuru county, Kenya. This simple technology helps people unable to squat in the traditional latrines either due to old age or due to disabilities. The plastic chair only costs S$3.

*Photo credit: World Bank*

**Accessible Design Specification**

*Source: PAMSIMAS cited in the Guidance Note (World Bank, 2017)*

**Disability Inclusive Evacuation Planning**
The Centre for Disability in Development and Gana Unayan Kendra implement the disaster risk reduction project in Gaibandha district, Bangladesh. Gaibandha is prone to floods from the Brahmaputra River. Persons with disabilities were involved in all activities at all levels, and evacuation route, priorities, and responsibilities of different community members were decided.

*Source: GFDRR, Disability Inclusion in Disaster Risk Management*

**The Survival Yards — Inclusion in Agriculture**
The program in Niger works together with persons with disabilities and their families to develop 25 by 25-meter survival yards with a well and water canals for irrigation. The program developed a modified bucket for blind people which can automatically pour the water into a canal and distributed through the garden after being filled from the well. Such a simple adaptation can ensure persons with disabilities to be part of farming works, and part of the community.

*Source: CBM International cited in the Guidance Note (World Bank, 2017)*

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*Source: GFDRR, Disability Inclusion in Disaster Risk Management*

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q1. How much does it cost to make facilities accessible?**
A1. Retrofitting is expensive. But when accessibility is built into the initial design, it’s estimated to be less than 3% of the total cost.

**Q2. How will the new Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) impact operations in terms of including persons with disabilities?**
A2. The ESF requires clients to assess project impacts on persons with disabilities, promote universal access to services, ensure accessibility of information, and conduct inclusive consultations with all impacted. See the ESF Good Practice Note for additional considerations.

**Q3. How can we improve clients’ understandings and commitments on disability inclusion?**
A3. Continuous awareness raising and advocacy is necessary. Messages mentioned in “Why Disability Inclusive Development?” section of this brief could be used for starting a dialogue with service providers, governments and other development partners.

**Additional resources:**
- [World Report on Disability](#)
- [Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework](#)
- [New Environmental and Social Framework](#)
- [Good Practice Note: Non-Discrimination and Disability](#)

Social Inclusion in Water: [http://inclusioninwater](http://inclusioninwater)

Contact: Toyoko Kodama, Kamila Galeza, and Ayumi Koyama

**The Accessibility and Safety Audit**
The Accessibility and Safety Audit is a participatory method to assess accessibility of proposed facilities and identify possible improvements. It’s important to involve persons with disabilities in conducting the audit, which entails forming a team, visiting WSS facilities, taking measurements, documenting and assessing barriers that were not considered during construction, and proposing solutions to make the facility more accessible and user-friendly.

For more details, please see the short guidance and video.

*Source: WaterAid*