



Disability and Communication for Development at a Glance



“Our work with people with disabilities, within the Bank, or with our Clients, is far from finished. But I am proud of what we’ve done so far, and I am committed to continuing on this path. Let’s all work together to support our colleagues and to make the World Bank Group a model for inclusion of all people.”

Paul Wolfowitz

“Committed to Inclusion” video, December 2005

Disability and Development: What is the Role of Communication?

- Communication about disability and with people with disabilities can play a crucial role for the inclusion of disability in the development agenda;
- Proper communication is needed to raise awareness on disability, which is too often perceived as merely a health issue, approached with pity, stigma and basically unknown to the public at large;
- Communication campaigns are the basis for educating people on disability prevention and encouraging acceptance of disability as part of the diversity of the human condition (gender, religion, culture, etc.);
- Communication strategies that use positive messages are instrumental for behavioural change to fight stigma and prejudice with the goal of true social inclusion; and
- The use of a participatory approach, distinctive to development communication, is vital to including people with disabilities in stakeholder consultations and in communication assessments.

Why Should Disability be Included in Daily Communication Products

- To provide visibility of disability in the WB communication productions;
- To correct misinformation;
- To reduce fear about disability and increase familiarity with its issues;
- To reduce and fight “blame and shame”;
- To reinforce disability as just a normal part of diversity; and
- To place disability concerns within the realm of civil society.

How Can We Include People with Disabilities in Development Communication?

- Use proper communication formats and channels (such as large print, Braille, sign language, plain language, closed captioning videos, audio-described videos) to establish effective two-way communication with people with disabilities;
- Choose physically accessible locations as sites for meetings; and
- Use proper language and culturally acceptable terminology (ask local Disabled People Organizations what is locally acceptable).

What Development Sectors are Relevant to Disability and Fit Into Communication Professionals' Scope of Work?

- **All sectors in development:** Particularly but not exclusively because people with disabilities are included as a “vulnerable group.”
- **Poverty Reduction:** Poor people are disproportionately disabled, while people with disabilities are disproportionately poor, providing a direct correlation between disability and poverty. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can't be achieved if disability is not addressed. Awareness can be raised by using local data on disability, tied to human, child and women's rights, equity, and economic development to break the vicious cycle wherein poverty leads to disability which in turn leads to increased poverty.
- **Development:** Global annual GDP loss due to exclusion of disabled people from the labour market is estimated at between US\$1.37 to 1.94 trillion. Given the cross-sectoral nature of disability, issues can be addressed within in the wider context of programs or campaigns, demonstrating the broad range of success and other opportunities to invest in people with disabilities and contribute to a stronger economy.
- **Education:** Because of serious shortages of data on, and the complicated nature of defining disability, locally applicable ways to aggressively enumerate, classify and include children with disabilities need to be explored in order to meet Education For All, Universal Primary Education, MDG and other goals as appropriate. As well, information needs to be disseminated on how much educated people with disabilities can contribute to society.
- **Early Child Development:** ECD goals are to improve young children's' capacity to develop and learn not only through service delivery but also through mass communication to educate and support parents, caretakers and teachers to enhance knowledge and practices. ECD is a powerful tool for accelerating EFA and in meeting the MDGs for reducing poverty. EFA's first goal is to expand and improve ECD for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, such as disabled students.
- **Promoting a Just and Equitable Society:** Facts about the impact of exclusion, prejudice and discrimination on people with disabilities as well as on its serious effects on their families, caregivers, friends and communities can be provided in discussions and campaigns, such as for truth and reconciliation, conflict resolution, peace, freedom, democracy and other situation promoting tolerance, mutual respect, regard for human dignity, social cohesion, and rejection of violence.
- **Disability Prevention:** Disability can be integrated in Health, Population and Nutrition sector (diseases and conditions that cause or exacerbate disability such as polio, measles, micronutrient deficiencies, malnutrition, etc.); Water and Sanitation sector(prevention of fecal or water borne diseases, etc.); Environment and Social Sustainability Network (air and water quality, agricultural and industrial pollution, usability and sustainability of the built environment, etc.); and Social Protection and Labor sector (worker safety, child labor, etc.).
- **HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care:** People with disabilities acquire HIV/AIDS at up to three times more than do the non-disabled because of their risk for physical abuse, isolation, general poverty and lack of access to services. To prevent transmission and to mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS, people with disabilities must be actively targeted, as well as included in prevention and care efforts.
- **Gender:** In many cultures females with disabilities are vulnerable to double discrimination because of their gender and of their disability.

- **At-Risk Youth:** Such youth are more at risk for disability, while youth with disabilities are more likely to be out of school, unemployed and on the streets.
- **Security/Post-Disaster and Post Conflict:** War and natural disaster can cause disability (from both physical and mental trauma), and disabled people are more vulnerable in conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies.
- **Employment:** The majority of adults with disabilities remain unemployed despite their great potential and desire to contribute to the work force. They often face prejudice from employers, co-workers and society, and lack opportunities for education and training from a young age.
- **Infrastructure:** Physical accessibility, through the use of universal design principles, is a prerequisite for equal access to development, particularly in transportation, water and sanitation and communication.
- **Information & Communication Technologies:** ICT can increase access to opportunities and participation, by accommodating physical, sensory, mental and learning disabilities.

What are the Challenges for WB Communication Professionals?

- A lack of universal terms and definitions Cultural and language differences result in variation of acceptable terminology.
- The diversity of disability Not only does disability cross nationality, racial, linguistic, economic, and other boundaries, but also, there is incredible diversity within disability. The spectrum of the human condition include variations of abilities (e.g. mobility, hearing, visual, psychological, learning and communication), of degrees (e.g. mild, moderate, significant) and of accommodation (e.g. type, format and speed of presentation)
- The knowledge gap about disability (it is possible to help the public become familiar with disabilities through good communication examples, communication training and available resources)

What are some Successful Global Communications on Disability that might be Advocated by WB Communication Professionals?

- The inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in curricula, textbooks and storybooks for early childhood, primary and secondary education
- Developing national capacity in journalism and broadcasting for, about and with people with disabilities
- Encouraging INGOs, NGOs and private sector advertisers to include children and adults with disabilities in their commercials and public service advertisements
- Supporting film festivals that include positive inclusion and portrayals of people with disabilities in dramas, documentaries, commercial films

‘Where do I find ...?’ Quick Web References

- **Disability Knowledge** <http://disabilitytoolkit> **WB intranet**, <http://www.disabilitykar.net/>, http://www.asksourc.info/res_library/disability.htm **Health Link Worldwide** “*Health Communication through Partnership, Health and Disability Information*” <http://www.healthlink.org.uk/>
- **ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) for Development** “*Putting the Internet to Assist People with Disabilities*”

<http://topics.developmentgateway.org/ict/sdm/previewDocument.do~activeDocumentId=399217?activeDocumentId=399217>

- **Disability Statistics** <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/disability/default.asp>
www.cdc.gov/nchs/citygroup.htm ,
http://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/SeriesY/SeriesY_10e.pdf.
- **Photo Libraries** www.worldbank.org/photos search for “disability”;
www.ilo.org/public/english/sitemap www.un.org/photos/disabled.htm
www.johnbirdsall.co.uk/catalogue.shtml
- **Clip Art Libraries** www.disabilityart.com, www.artbycheryl.com,
<http://webclipart.miningco.com/cs/msub.disaa>
- **Documentary Libraries & Distributors** www.fanlight.com, www.mediarights.org,
www.docuseek.com
- **Disability & Media Websites** These sites monitor and report on disability & media, related conferences, and review new public education initiatives, films and television programs:www.disabilityworld.org, www.media-disability.org ,www.bbc.co.uk/ouch,
www.disabilityfilms.co.uk, www.towson.edu/~bhalle/disable.html,
www.accessiblesociety.org
- **Disability Film Festivals** These sites are an-going source of information about new prize winning disability films and festivals where they will be shown,
www.disabilityfilmfestival.net, www.perspektiva-inva.ru,www.filmfestival.kolobrzeg.pl
www.picturethisfestival.org, www.madknight.com/cdt/superfest/index.htm, www.paraquad-nsw.asn.au, www.enablelink.org/abilitiesfestival/index
- **WB Accessibility of Buildings and Services**
<http://intresources.worldbank.org/INTOURGSD/Publications/20286355/dwg.pdf>
- **WB Conference Services: Creating Accessible Meetings**
<http://intranet.worldbank.org/WBSITE/INTRANET/WRC/0,,contentMDK:20159914~menuPK:354072~pagePK:39343~piPK:39371~theSitePK:30502,00.html>
- **WB Web Resource Center: Accessibility:**
<http://intranet.worldbank.org/WBSITE/INTRANET/WRC/0,,contentMDK:20159914~menuPK:354072~pagePK:39343~piPK:39371~theSitePK:30502,00.html>
- **WB PDF Accessibility**
<http://intranet.worldbank.org/WBSITE/INTRANET/UNITS/ISGSITE/INTUNIISGACCPRG/0,,contentMDK:20686163~menuPK:1563626~pagePK:64168332~piPK:64168299~theSitePK:1563599,00.html>

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