**POLICY BRIEF ON SDG 1**

**End poverty in all its forms everywhere**

**Vision**

To end poverty in all its forms, persons with disabilities must be empowered, enjoy equal rights, be valued as active contributors of society and understood as agents and beneficiaries of development. Persons with disabilities will be lifted out of poverty when they, and their families, have equal opportunities for education and employment, access to necessary supports and services, and are included in general poverty-reduction and social protection programmes.

**Introduction**

Persons with disabilities experience higher rates of poverty and deprivation and lower levels of income than the general population.[[1]](#footnote-1) This is stemming from pervasive discrimination and stigma, unequal opportunities, and physical and attitudinal barriers. In addition, lack of access to education, in particular has a significant impact on poverty and societal exclusion in adulthood of persons with disabilities.[[2]](#footnote-2) Poverty impacts more than just the individual; it impacts the family unit as a whole. Due to a lack of supports to individuals and to their families, households with a member with a disability are more likely to experience material hardship, including lack of access to safe water and sanitation and food insecurity.[[3]](#footnote-3) Additionally, persons with disabilities are at high risk of fuel poverty, with potentially serious health consequences.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Across the world, persons with disabilities have less economic participation and higher rates of poverty than persons without disabilities. Global data from the World Health Survey show that employment rates are lower for men with disabilities (53%) and women with disabilities (20%) than for men without disabilities (65%) and women (30%). Persons with disabilities may have extra costs for personal support or for medical care or assistive devices. Because of these higher costs, persons with disabilities and their households are likely to be poorer than persons without disabilities with similar income. Persons with disabilities in low-income countries are 50% more likely to experience catastrophic health expenditure than persons without disabilities.

Lifting persons with disabilities and their families out of poverty would contribute to the achievement of inclusive growth and sustainable development.[[5]](#footnote-5)

***Link to CRPD***

Poverty eradication is a cross-cutting effort that must address all areas of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Specifically, to address poverty: persons with disabilities are entitled to adequate food and being free from hunger (articles 25 (f), 28, para. 1), to the highest attainable standard of health (CRPD articles 16, para. 4, 22, para. 2, and 25), to quality education (CRPD article 24), and to accessible information on policies and programs on an equal basis with others (CRPD article 21) and free of discrimination (CRPD articles 3 (b), 5). Further, equal participation in sustainable development must also be considered in view of the specific situation of women with disabilities (CRPD article 6), children with disabilities (CRPD article 7), indigenous peoples with disabilities, and migrants and refugees with disabilities.

***General Recommendations***

* Invest in building inclusive communities and ensuring inclusion of persons with disabilities throughout their lifespan.
* Mainstream persons with disabilities into development policies and programs.
* Ensure that persons with disabilities are protected from poverty and benefit adequately from mainstream poverty-alleviation programs.
* Mainstream poverty-alleviation programs must be accessible for all, including access to social-protection systems and measures, such as ensure access to information, resources and facilities in housing, public services like transport and ATM machines, education and health care.
* Introduce measures to ensure that economic resources, basic services, new technology, financial services, including microfinance and ownership (land, property, inheritance and natural resources) are fully accessible to all in line with the CRPD.
* Provide reasonable accommodation to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities in all decision-making levels and at all stages of the implementation process.
* Ensure disability-friendly infrastructures (work environment), technologies and economic policies.
* Disaggregate data by disability when measuring and reporting.
* Disaggregate data by barriers overcome when measuring and reporting.
* Ensure that families of persons with disabilities have support to offset disability-associated costs.
* Ensure employment-protection measures are in place for family members who may require additional time off or flexible employment arrangements to support their family member(s) with a disability.

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1. S. Mitra, A. Posarac and B. Vick, *Disability and Poverty in Developing Countries: a Snapshot from the World Health Survey* (World Bank, 2011); Eurostat, “Disability statistics: poverty and income inequalities”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A/70/297 – SR on disability on the right of persons with disabilities to social protection, para 27 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. World Disability Report. (2011). World Health Organisation & World Bank. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.eagacharitabletrust.org/images/files/ccestheenergypenaltyjune2013.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. https://thehardesthit.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/the\_tipping\_point\_oct\_2012.pdf; http://www.enil.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Austerity-European-Report\_FINAL.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-5)