



Mainstreaming Disability Inclusion in JICA Projects

Sector-Specific Guidance Note

Social Security

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Sections [1](#), [2](#), [3](#) provide an overview for those seeking to understand the basics, while Section [4](#) offers specific steps for mainstreaming disability inclusion.

Main Target Areas Covered by this Guidance Note

Based on the Global Agenda for Social Security/Disability and Development of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), this Guidance Note focuses on the following three main areas. As for No. 3 “Improvement of Employment and Working Environment”, the focus is specifically on employment support for vulnerable groups. Disability-specific employment support and working environment interventions targeting persons with disabilities are not included in the scope of this Guidance Note.

1. **Establishment of Social Insurance Systems:** Social insurance systems such as pensions, insurance for unemployment and occupational hazards
2. **Promotion of Social Welfare:** Social welfare services for children, persons with disabilities, older persons, and those in poverty
3. **Improvement of Employment and Working Environment**

For health financing (health insurance), please also refer to the Guidance Note for the health sector.

1. Basic Understanding of Persons with Disabilities and Social Security

This section explains the fundamental concepts essential for promoting disability inclusion in social security.

(1) Disability-inclusive Social Security Systems

- Traditional social security systems have historically viewed persons with disabilities as "objects of protection", emphasizing income maintenance and care through institutional placement. In contrast, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), adopted in 2006, reframes persons with disabilities as right holders —subjects entitled to full participation in society and recognition as active contributors to social, economic, and civic life.
- Based on this principle, the international community is called upon to establish disability-inclusive social security systems as mechanisms for guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities and promoting their full participation and inclusion in society.
- This approach is also reflected in the Joint Statement issued in 2019 by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Disability Alliance (IDA), and other partners [1] .

(2) Disability-related Costs

- Disability-related costs refer to the additional expenses incurred for the support, services, and accommodation necessary for persons with disabilities and their families to conduct daily life. These costs constitute a critical consideration in the design and implementation of social security systems for persons with disabilities.
- By ensuring adequate support for disability-related costs, an enabling environment is created in which persons with disabilities can exercise their rights and participate fully in society on an equal basis with others. Accordingly, the identification and coverage of disability-related costs within social security systems are essential to achieving inclusion and equality [2] .

Disability-Related Costs [2]

| Categories | Contents |
|----------------|---|
| Direct costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical expenses, transportation costs (due to inaccessibility of using public transportation), childcare services for children with disabilities, housing costs (relocation to barrier-free living environments, relocation for the education or rehabilitation of children with disabilities) • Disability-specific spending including assistive devices such as wheelchair, Braille reader, and rehabilitation and social support (such as personal assistance or sign language interpreters) |
| Indirect costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower incomes due to discrimination in access to education and employment • Opportunity costs for family members (often women and girls) due to providing unpaid care and support services (limiting educational and employment opportunities, causing direct and lasting social and economic impacts) |

(3) Social Security Systems for Persons with Disabilities

- The figure below illustrates the framework of social security measures for persons with disabilities, categorized into: 1) cash benefits, 2) in-kind benefits, and 3) coordination with related measures. These measures serve functions including income security, financial assistance for healthcare and disability-related costs, and improved access to other services, and encompass both general and disability-specific interventions.
- Cash benefits are categorized into contributory and non-contributory schemes, while in-kind benefits are classified into support services and fee reductions or exemptions.
- Countries design and integrate these components within their social security systems in ways that reflect national contexts and respond to the diverse needs of persons with disabilities.

Figure: Social Security Systems for Persons with Disabilities

| Categories | Lifecycle | | | Main Function |
|--------------------|--|--|------------------|---|
| | Childhood | Working age | Old age | |
| Cash Benefits | Poverty assistance cash transfer, cash for work | | | Income security |
| | Child grant, family benefits | Unemployment, maternity, sickness, parental leave benefits | Old age pensions | |
| | | Disability related income replacement benefits | | |
| | Disability allowance/benefits, top up schemes, Tax Deductions for Persons with Disabilities and Other Applicable Deductions | | | Coverage of disability-related costs and healthcare costs |
| Caregiver benefits | | | | |
| In-kind Benefits | Services Community care and support (personal assistance, interpreters, respite care, counselling) Healthcare (health insurance, cost coverage for early intervention, rehabilitation, assistive devices) | | | Coverage of disability-related costs and healthcare costs |
| | Concessions (free or discounted public transportation, utilities, assistive devices, etc.) | | | |
| Inter-linkages | Early childhood development, childcare, education | Economic inclusion/empowerment programs, decent work programs, return to work programs, women's empowerment, protection services, etc. | | Connections to other services |

Source: Adopted from on [2]

2. Significance of Disability Inclusion in Social Security

(1) Social Security Addressing Risks for Persons with Disabilities

- Persons with disabilities face multiple risks throughout their life course, with both the frequency and severity of these risks being significantly higher than those experienced by persons without disabilities. Social security systems play an indispensable role in safeguarding the lives and rights of persons with disabilities, reducing income and opportunity inequalities, and promoting social participation and inclusion.
- Persons with disabilities face institutional, physical, and communication barriers across multiple domains, including healthcare, education, and employment, which interact in complex and compounding ways. In addition, disability-related costs, such as costs for support services and assistive devices, increase their economic burden and heighten the risk of poverty. These challenges affect not only persons with disabilities themselves but also their caregiving families—particularly women and girls—thereby increasing the vulnerability of entire households.

Key Risks Faced by Persons with Disabilities Throughout Their Lifecycle [1], [3]

Disparities in Poverty Rates

The poverty rate among persons with disabilities is higher than among those without disabilities and becomes even more severe when disability-related costs are considered. The multidimensional poverty index also shows higher rates for persons with disabilities: 80% for persons with disabilities versus 60% for persons without disabilities.

Risks for Children with Disabilities

Children with disabilities are up to 17 times more likely to be institutionalized and approximately 4 times more likely to experience violence.

NEET¹ Rate among Youth

The NEET rate among young people with disabilities is approximately 50%, twice that of young people without disabilities. Reduced support in adulthood also increases the risk of poverty.

Employment Challenges for Persons with Disabilities

The employment rate for persons with disabilities is 27%, less than half that of persons without disabilities. Women with disabilities have limited opportunities for formal employment.

Disability in Old Age and Insufficient Support

Approximately 46% of people aged 60 and over have disabilities, and there is a tendency for support to be difficult to secure despite increasing support needs.

¹ Not in Education, Employment, or Training

(2) Contribution to the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Mainstreaming disability inclusion within the social security sector is a critical strategy for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is particularly instrumental in achieving SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).
- Specifically, Target 1.3 and Indicator 1.3.1 of Goal 1 (No Poverty) explicitly state the importance of social protection for all people, including persons with disabilities.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Target 1.3 | Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures, including floors, and achieve adequate coverage of the poor and the vulnerable by 2030. |
| Indicator 1.3.1 | Proportion of population covered by social protection systems (by sex, children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims, the poor and the vulnerable). |

(3) Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) [4]

- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) clearly underscores the vital role that social security systems play in ensuring lifelong social participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- Article 28, "Adequate standard of living and social protection," establishes the obligation of States Parties to guarantee equal access to social protection, thereby securing the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living and human dignity.
- Furthermore, Articles 19 and 20 require States Parties to ensure access to community living and personal mobility, highlighting that the development of inclusive social security systems is essential for the full and effective realization of the Convention.

(4) Contribution to JICA Global Agenda [5]

- JICA's Global Agenda in the field of "Social Security/Disability and Development" aims to promote a society that is inclusive of vulnerable populations, including older people, women, children, and persons with disabilities. A central objective is the development of social security systems that safeguard the livelihoods and rights of people in vulnerable situations.
- Advancing the mainstreaming of disability inclusion in the social security sector is essential to achieving this goal. By systematically integrating a disability perspective from the design stage of social security systems and ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities throughout the process, their livelihood stability and opportunities for social participation are strengthened, reducing the risk of marginalization.

(5) Joint Statement: "Towards Comprehensive Social Security Systems that Support the Full and Effective Participation of Persons with Disabilities" (2019) [1]

- In 2019, 20 international organizations, including ILO, the International Disability Alliance (IDA), and JICA, issued a joint statement calling for the development of comprehensive social security systems that support the full participation of persons with disabilities. The statement highlighted the importance of social security in addressing the risks and vulnerabilities faced by persons with disabilities and proposed directions for institutional reform.

3. Challenges in the Social Security Sector from a Disability Perspective

(1) Coverage Gap for Persons with Disabilities in Social Security (2023 Data) [6]

Cash Benefit Coverage for Persons with Disabilities

- Among people with severe disabilities worldwide, 38.9% receive cash benefits.
- By income level: 85.6% in high-income countries, 50.0% in upper-middle-income countries, 19.1% in low-middle-income countries, and 3.3% in low-income countries.
- Regional² coverage remains particularly low in Africa (8.1%), Arab States (15.9%), and South Asia (19.2%).

- Despite the high prevalence of poverty among persons with disabilities in developing countries, income security systems often function inadequately. In many countries, disability benefits are tied to contributory schemes, which creates challenges for groups such as children with disabilities, unemployed persons with disabilities, and those working in the informal sector, who are frequently excluded from coverage.
- As of 2023, only 36% of countries have introduced non-contributory social welfare systems, and many of these are subject to means testing.
- Universal systems remain rare, and achieving comprehensive income security for persons with disabilities will require a fundamental reform of existing social security frameworks.

(2) Inadequate Levels and Scope of Social Security for Persons with Disabilities [1] [2] [3]

- In many low- and middle-income countries, cash benefits for persons with disabilities are often insufficient to provide meaningful income security, and most social security systems fail to account for disability-related costs.
- Social security systems that determine benefit eligibility and amounts based on household income present significant challenges. Even when the household's total income meets the eligibility criteria, this does not ensure that the person with a disability has access to their own resources or that essential disability-

² Regional classification by the International Labour Organization (ILO)

related expenses —such as care costs, assistive devices, and medical expenses—are adequately covered. Consequently, persons with disabilities may be disadvantaged even with their own households.

- Furthermore, support services —such as caregivers and sign language interpreters —are not systematically available, placing a substantial burden on family members, particularly women and girls.
- Access to prosthetics and assistive devices is also severely limited; globally, only 5% to 15% of individuals who need them are able to access such devices.

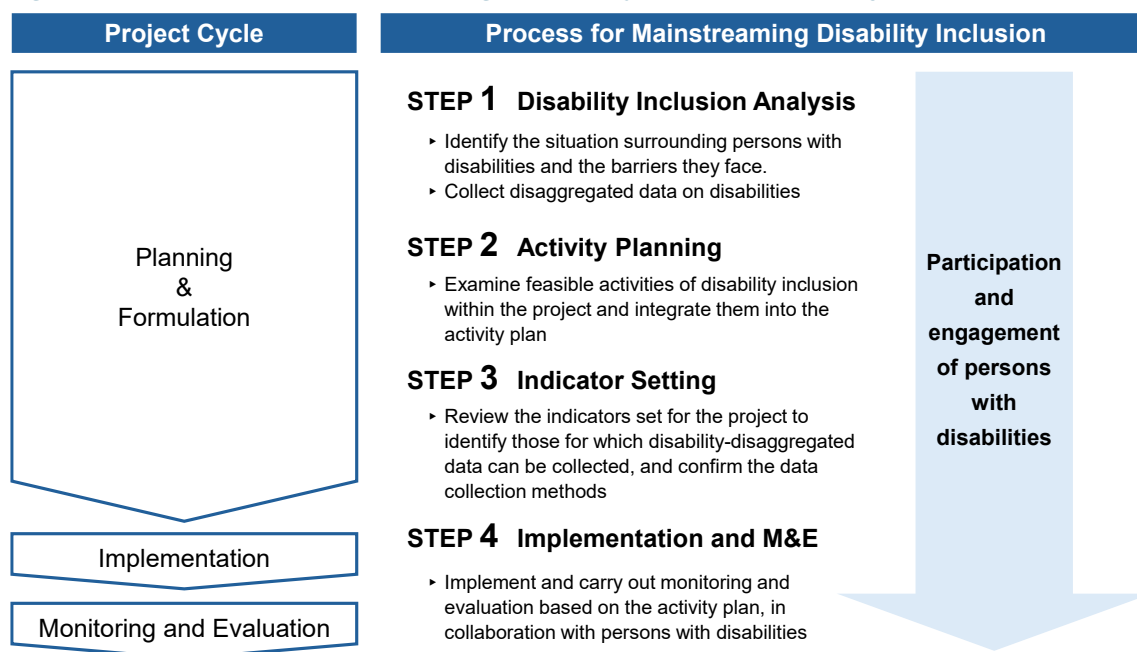
(3) Challenges in Designing Disability-inclusive Social Security Systems

- Many disability benefits systems require an "inability to work" as a condition for eligibility. However, many persons with disabilities are employed and still incur disability-related costs. A comprehensive system should be designed to support all persons with disabilities, regardless of employment status.
- The medical model and charitable approaches that treat persons with disabilities as "objects of protection" risk undermining their autonomy, potentially leading to social exclusion and discrimination. A shift towards a rights-based approach is essential to uphold their dignity and inclusion.
- Disability certification is a crucial mechanism for determining support needs. However, in many countries, it relies heavily on medical diagnosis, often failing to capture the actual daily challenges and support requirements of individuals. As a result, many who need assistance are excluded from support systems. In regions with limited medical resources, the certification process itself can become a barrier, further restricting access to essential support.

4. How to Mainstream Disability Inclusion in Projects: Steps for Implementation

- Mainstreaming disability inclusion in projects means incorporating and implementing a disability perspective at all stages of project planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This Guidance Note introduces methods for mainstreaming disability inclusion in the 4 STEPs as shown in the figure below.
- STEPs 1-3 correspond to the project formulation stage of the project cycle, and STEP 4 to the implementation and post-completion stage. While keeping all STEPs through project completion in mind, it is particularly important to work on disability inclusion at **the project formulation stage**.
- At the stage of obtaining the Official Request Letter from the partner government, it is important to consult with counterparts and the JICA local office to ensure that efforts for disability inclusion are included and that there is no risk of excluding persons with disabilities.

Figure: Process for Mainstreaming Disability Inclusion in Projects



- The table below shows when each STEP applies within the project cycles for technical cooperation, official development assistance (ODA) loans, and grant aid.

| Scheme | Project Cycle | STEP |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Technical Cooperation | At the time of preparing the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the data collection survey, and detailed or basic planning survey. | STEP 1 (Analysis) |
| | At the time of drafting Main Point Discussed in the Record of Discussion (R/D) (activities related to disability inclusion), PDM, and Ex-ante Evaluation document. | STEP 2 (Activity Planning) STEP 3 (Indicator Setting) |
| | At the time of preparing the TOR of the project, implementing the project, and reviewing a monitoring sheet. | STEP 4 (Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation) |
| ODA Loans | At the time of preparing the TOR for the data collection survey and preparatory survey, and drafting Project Planning Document (1). | STEP 1 (Analysis) |
| | At the time of preparing the Minutes of Discussion (M/D), Project Planning Document (2)/(3), appraisal document, and drafting Ex-ante Evaluation document. | STEP 2 (Activity Planning) STEP 3 (Indicator Setting) |
| | At the time of supervising the project and reviewing Project Status Report. | STEP 4 (Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation) |
| Grant Aid | At the time of preparing the TOR for the data collection survey and Preparatory Survey, and drafting Project Planning Document (1). | STEP 1 (Analysis) |
| | At the time of preparing the Minutes of Discussion (M/D), Project Planning Document (2)/(3), appraisal document, and drafting Ex-ante Evaluation document. | STEP 2 (Activity Planning) STEP 3 (Indicator Setting) |
| | At the time of supervising the project and reviewing Project Status Report. | STEP 4 (Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation) |

STEP 1 Disability Inclusion Analysis

- During project planning and formulation, conduct a disability inclusion analysis to assess the situation of persons with disabilities within the sector and identify the barriers they face. Additionally, collect disability-disaggregated data regarding target groups.
- Use the disability inclusion analysis to ensure that the project design does not pose any risk of excluding persons with disabilities, nor create disadvantages or negative impacts for them. Carefully review and confirm these aspects throughout the planning process.

[JICA Country-Specific Disability-Related Information](#) (currently available in Japanese language only) contains disability-related information for each of the 55 countries where JICA implements projects. If information exists for the target country, it is recommended to check it first.

As an English-language information source, the [World Bank Group's Disability Data Hub](#) provides country-specific data.

1) Reflect: The relationship between the project and disability

- Clearly define how disability intersects with the project. Identify the components of the project that have the strongest relevance to persons with disabilities.

2) Ask: Consult with persons with disabilities or their representative organizations to understand the barriers they encounter

- Engage and consult with persons with disabilities and/or their representative organizations about the kind of barriers that prevent access to and participation in social security programs and services targeted by the project. Make sure to seek input from a wide range of individuals, including persons with diverse types of disabilities and women with disabilities.
- Then, request their participation in STEPs 2-4 described the following sections. **It is crucial to involve persons with disabilities at all stages.**

CHECK

Including methods for engaging organizations of persons with disabilities, the **Guidance Note for Across All Thematic Areas** introduces the following under “Section 4: Specific Approaches for Mainstreaming Disability Inclusion.”

- Methods for Engaging with Persons with Disabilities
- Forms of Participation of Persons with Disabilities
- General Accessibility Measures and Reasonable Accommodations
- Information and Communication Accessibility
- Inclusive Events (Meetings, Seminars, Training, etc.)

- Below are sample questions. Additionally, please refer to Appendix 1 for examples of barriers.

| Barrier | Example Questions |
|------------------------|--|
| Institutional Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What barriers exist in the current social security systems that prevent participation of persons with disabilities? (For example, persons with disabilities deemed unable to work are excluded from participating in public works projects; costs related to disabilities required for program participation are not considered, etc.) |
| Physical Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What barriers prevent access to administrative offices and completing procedures? • What physical barriers exist within the buildings of administrative offices where procedures are conducted. |
| Communication Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What barriers exist when individuals cannot access necessary information about social security programs and services? • What barriers exist during procedures or applications? (e.g., being refused written communication) |
| Attitudinal Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What attitudes or perceptions among front-desk staff or family members hinder participation in programs or receipt of services? |

3) Check: Collection of disability-disaggregated data³

| Data | Information Sources |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of persons with disabilities among participants of the social protection programs targeted by the project (e.g., the percentage of persons with disabilities among beneficiaries of poverty-reduction programs). Disability-disaggregated data of target groups in project target areas Data on groups marginalized from social security services and programs (women with disabilities, specific ethnicities, children with disabilities, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government statistics Reports from ministries and agencies related to persons with disabilities, etc. Interviews with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations |

4) Explore: Situation of persons with disabilities within the sector

| Key Information to Identify | Information Sources |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of content addressing persons with disabilities or disability inclusion perspectives in social security-related laws, policies, strategies, action plans, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government documents |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptions related to Article 28 in CRPD Concluding Observations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRPD Concluding Observations * On the search page of the CRPD (States Parties Reporting), specify the country and the type of document. |
| <p>Stakeholders: Resources and Partners for Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministries and departments responsible for persons with disabilities Organizations of persons with disabilities JICA's experience in disability and development (technical cooperation, JOCV, grassroots projects, etc.) International and bilateral agencies with experience related to mainstreaming disability inclusion in the social security sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JICA Country-Specific Disability-Related Information (currently available in Japanese language only) World Bank Group Disability Data Hub >> Economies |

³ Data disaggregated by disability status and type of functional limitation, comparable to sex- and age-disaggregated data.

STEP 2 Activity Planning

(see Appendix 2 for Examples of Good Practices)

- Based on the situation and barriers faced by persons with disabilities in the sector identified through the disability inclusion analysis in STEP 1, consider feasible activities within the project and incorporate them into the activity plan.
- Furthermore, when planning the overall project, ensure that the project's objectives and plans promote the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities and do not promote their segregation or exclusion.

Examples of Activities to Promote Disability Inclusion

Note: Priority and feasible activities should be determined through consultation with stakeholders, including persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

| Barriers | Example Activities |
|------------------------|---|
| Institutional Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation of persons with disabilities in design and review of social security systems • Ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities and allocating budgets for additional costs required for applications and procedures • Development of disability statistics disaggregated by age, gender, and socioeconomic indicators |
| Physical Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of one-stop centers where citizens can complete procedures in convenient locations • Development of online systems for applications and procedures • Development of outreach systems (enabling information provision, applications, and procedures via outreach for individuals with severe disabilities who have difficulty leaving home, based on circumstances) • Flexible system design allowing applications and procedures to be conducted by representatives • Barrier-free access and provision of reasonable accommodations at administrative offices handling procedures (e.g., locating service counters on the first floor) • Subsidizing additional costs required for applications and procedures for persons with disabilities • Reduction of waiting times and processing times |

| Barriers | Example Activities |
|------------------------|---|
| Communication Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information in accessible formats (Braille, audio narration, videos with subtitles or sign language interpretation, easy-to-read and plain language) • Providing information through diverse means (written materials, websites, radio, information dissemination through citizen groups such as organizations of persons with disabilities, outreach by social workers) • Application and procedure support in accessible formats • Deployment of support services (including volunteers) for application and procedure assistance (accompanying support, information support, etc.) • Establishment of complaint mechanisms using diverse means |
| Attitudinal Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of training for administrative staff on disability and human rights (including the rights of persons with disabilities, principles of inclusion, and methods for providing non-discriminatory and accessible services) • Incorporating content on ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities into operational manuals |

Source: Developed based on [2] [1] [7] , etc.

STEP 3 Indicator Setting

- Among the indicators set for the project (indicators for project purpose and outputs), review which indicators can collect disability-disaggregated data and confirm the data collection methods.

Example:

If "number of households receiving cash benefits" is set as a project goal indicator, set "number of households including persons with disabilities" as the disability-disaggregated data.

- Also, consider indicators to measure outputs (changes) expected from activities planned in STEP 2, and integrate them into existing indicators or add them. Below are examples of indicators incorporating a disability perspective.

| Example Indicators |
|--------------------|
|--------------------|

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether consultation with persons with disabilities was conducted during the development of policy documents (such as systems, strategies, or guidelines); overview of consultation, if conducted - Existence/number of policy documents reflecting a disability perspective (For example, ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities, budget allocation for additional costs required for access) - Percentage of persons with disabilities among users of social security services targeted/implemented by the project - Level of understanding among administrative staff at social security service counters regarding disability and rights - Existence or number of service counters with improved accessibility (including information accessibility) - Availability or number of information and publicity materials provided in accessible formats - Availability or number of diverse means for information provision and complaint submission - Whether content on disability and rights has been incorporated into administrative staff training and manuals |
|---|

STEP 4 Implementation and Monitoring & Evaluation

- When implementing and monitoring activities, collaborate with persons with disabilities (and/or organizations of persons with disabilities) to confirm whether activity content is appropriate, and whether activities, deliverables, and services being implemented are accessible and user-friendly.
- Also, pay close attention to whether the promotion and implementation of project activities respect the diversity of persons with disabilities and are conducted in a manner that promotes their dignity, rights, and potential.
- During evaluation, assess the achievements of activities from a disability inclusion perspective, their implementation process, and outcomes. Below are sample questions from a disability inclusion perspective.

Guiding Questions from a Disability Inclusion Perspective

| Six Evaluation Criteria | Sample Questions |
|-------------------------|--|
| Relevance | <p>Counterpart Country's Development Policies and Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do disability inclusion activities align with priority issues and contents stated in the counterpart country's disability policy or sector policy? <p>Appropriateness of Project Plan and Approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was mainstreaming of disability inclusion considered during project formulation? Was information collected from persons with disabilities and organizations of persons with disabilities during project formulation? Was participation of persons with disabilities promoted in the project implementation process? Were methods employed to avoid excluding specific types of disabilities or specific groups of persons with disabilities (e.g., women with disabilities, ethnic minorities, or other minorities)? |
| Coherence | <p>Consistency with Japanese Government/JICA Development Cooperation Policies and Coordination with Other JICA Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were disability inclusion activities consistent with Japanese government and JICA policies? Was coordination with other JICA projects undertaken to promote disability inclusion activities? <p>Coordination with International Frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the project consistent with the CRPD? Did disability inclusion activities contribute to achieving global goals such as SDGs? |
| Effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent were outcomes achieved for persons with disabilities through disability inclusion activities? Did disability inclusion activities contribute to achieving project purpose and outputs? |
| Impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can positive long-term or indirect effects be expected from disability inclusion activities? For example, fostering leadership of persons with disabilities, participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes, and institutional reforms. Have any negative indirect effects emerged because disability inclusion activities were not implemented or because disability inclusion analysis was insufficient? For example, exacerbating discrimination or stigma against persons with disabilities. |
| Efficiency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were disability inclusion activities conducted within the planned budget and timeframe? Was project efficiency being prioritized at the expense of excluding specific groups such as persons with disabilities? |

| Six Evaluation Criteria | Sample Questions |
|-------------------------|--|
| Sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will persons with disabilities and their representative organizations continue to be involved in the disability inclusion process?• Is continuation of outcomes achieved for persons with disabilities appropriately planned?• Will the services and systems established in the project continue to be expanded and maintained in a manner that ensures equality and participation of persons with disabilities? |

Appendix 1: Barriers to Access and Participation for Persons with Disabilities in Social Security

Persons with disabilities face multiple barriers—including institutional, physical, communication, or attitudinal—when accessing social security services. Many existing systems are grounded on the medical model of disability, which can undermine independence and limit social participation. Adopting a rights-based approach to system design requires the systematic identification of these barriers and proactive measures to reduce the risk of exclusion.

Barriers Preventing Access to Social Security Programs for Persons with Disabilities

| Barriers | Examples |
|------------------------|---|
| Institutional Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System design and disability certification based on the medical model: Individuals may be unable to receive social security services even when experiencing disability in daily life⁴, and necessary support for social participation and daily living may not be considered. • System design requiring inability to work: If engaged in job hunting or employment, disability benefits may be inaccessible, making it difficult to cover disability-related costs. This can potentially hinder motivation to work and economic independence. • System design disregarding disability-related costs: During means testing, the additional costs required for daily living and social participation by persons with disabilities are not considered, leading to exclusion from benefit eligibility. • System design excluding individuals without national ID: People facing multiple challenges and discrimination may not be registered in official records like family registers or resident registrations at birth, preventing them from qualifying for services. • Inadequate disability-disaggregated statistical data: The number of persons with disabilities and their support needs are not accurately understood, hindering the development of needs-based policies, the provision of necessary services, and the securing of sufficient budgets. |

⁴ In some countries, even when individuals require support in their daily lives due to psychosocial disabilities or rare and intractable diseases, they may not be institutionally recognized as persons with disabilities and therefore may not be eligible for social security services intended for persons with disabilities.

| Barriers | Examples |
|------------------------|--|
| Physical Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of accessibility to administrative offices for procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long distances to administrative offices - Administrative offices lack barrier-free facilities or accessible restrooms - Costs incurred to visit administrative offices (transportation, personal assistants, interpreters), and opportunity costs for accompanying family members - Absence of accompanying caregivers |
| Communication Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of accessibility in providing information about social security services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of information provided in diverse media and formats, leading to unaware of eligible programs - Complex and difficult-to-understand content - Complex and cumbersome application procedures: unfamiliarity with application methods, lack of support for application procedures - Inadequate information support during application: absence of sign language interpreters or note-takers |
| Attitudinal Barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prejudice or discriminatory attitudes by frontline staff: Negative or discriminatory responses cause individuals to give up on receiving necessary support; staff misunderstanding of disabilities leads to misinformation or procedural delays • Lack of reasonable accommodations during procedures: Administrative officials' lack of understanding results in failure to provide reasonable accommodations during application processes or service delivery (For example, a person with albinism, who has low resistance to ultraviolet rays, being made to wait outdoors for a long time). |

When implementing international cooperation projects in the social security sector, it is essential to pay close attention to the barriers identified above that hinder the participation of persons with disabilities. If unaddressed, these barriers may prevent persons with disabilities from accessing the project and benefitting from project outcomes, thereby leading to their exclusion. Specific examples include the following:

- The importance of involving persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in stakeholder consultations during project design and planning is insufficiently recognized.

- Project stakeholders' limited understanding of disability leads to one-sided decision-making, which in turn restricts access to social protection programs, such as employment support activities.
- Persons with disabilities are excluded from support programs when disability-related expenses are overlooked, resulting in the application of income eligibility criteria without appropriate adjustment.
- Information on opportunities to participate in project activities or training is not provided in accessible formats, preventing it from reaching persons with disabilities who may wish to participate.
- Training sessions or seminars are held in inaccessible venues, effectively forcing persons with disabilities to forgo participation.

Such forms of exclusion not only deprive persons with disabilities of meaningful opportunities but also undermine the equity and sustainability of international cooperation projects. Therefore, it is crucial to integrate a disability perspective throughout all stages of the project cycle, including planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Appendix 2: Examples of Good Practices in Mainstreaming Disability Inclusion in Social Security

(1) Addition of Disability Items to the IDPoor Questionnaire (Cambodia) **[8] [9] [10]**

In 2007, the Cambodian government, with support from the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), introduced the "IDPoor (National Identification of Poor Households Program)" to systematically identify poor households and facilitate access to social security services. This IDPoor system serves as the national foundation for targeting and delivering assistance including healthcare, education support, and cash transfers.

In 2022, following the advocacy of the GIZ, the IDPoor screening procedures and selection criteria were revised to incorporate disability-related information as a new assessment factor. Under this revision, households with children or adults with disabilities receive higher poverty score to reflect the additional daily constraints and increased costs associated with medical care and long-term care. Moreover, households whose income slightly exceed the poverty line but include at least one member with a moderate or severe disability are classified as being at high risk of falling into poverty and are therefore registered in the system. Specific mechanisms are in place to link these households to appropriate support when needed, ensuring that they are not excluded from the social protection system.

(2) Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Public Works (Malawi) **[8] [11]**

From 2015 to 2017, a GIZ-supported pilot project in Malawi worked to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Public Works Programme, which provides temporary employment to unemployed and low-income individuals.

District councils partnered with the Malawi Council for the Handicapped to deliver disability awareness training to administrative staff and community organizations, emphasizing the productive potential of persons with disabilities. Community-wide awareness activities, including engagement with persons with disabilities and their families, complemented these efforts. Disability inclusion was also integrated into guidelines for community-level extension workers. As a result, implementing agencies introduced flexible accommodations, such as reduced working hours and alternative tasks suited aligned with the participants' physical capacities. These measures led to a significant increase in participation by persons with disabilities,

rising from less than 1% prior to the pilot project to 4.4% by the third implementation cycle.

(3) Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in a Social Protection Program Targeting Adolescent Girls (Uganda) [2] [12]

The "Girls Empowering Girls (GEG)" program is a social protection initiative launched in 2019 by the Kampala Capital City Authority, with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Government of Belgium. It targets adolescent girls living in urban areas and seeks to support their safe transition into adulthood by promoting independence and social participation. The program adopts an integrated approach that combines cash transfers, peer mentoring, and referrals to welfare services.

The program implements a range of accommodations to ensure the equal participation of girls with disabilities. These include supplementary cash transfers to off-set disability-related costs and assistance with scheduling medical appointments and providing transportation to facilitate acquisition of required disability certification. Peer mentoring is adapted to individual needs, offering one-on-one support when group participation is challenging and reasonable accommodations such as sign language interpretation. In addition, girls with disabilities are referred to disability-specific services, including assistive devices, alongside health, education, and life support services, thereby creating a comprehensive and inclusive support system.

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