Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework
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An outline for the framework was discussed in a roundtable organized in conjunction with the World Bank's Spring Meetings in Washington, DC, on April 15, 2016. A side event on the outline was held during the 9th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the UN in New York on June 16, 2016.

A series of meetings on disability inclusion at World Bank headquarters served as a platform to highlight the framework in several sectors and units, including GSURR; Water, Transport and Digital Development; Trade and Competitiveness; Education; Social Protection and Labor; Development Data Group; Operations Policy and Country Services; and the cross-cutting Disability-Inclusive Development Knowledge Silo Breaker. Disability inclusion was also raised in meetings with the Regional Management Teams of the Latin America and the Caribbean Region and the Africa Region.

Consultation meetings on draft frameworks were held with disabled persons' organizations, government representatives, and Bank staff in the World Bank Offices in Nairobi (November 2–3, 2016), Lusaka (November 8–9, 2016), Dhaka (October 4–5 and 8, 2017) and Montevideo (February 27–28, 2018). The meetings in Nairobi, Lusaka, and Dhaka were organized in cooperation with Leonard Cheshire Disability. Sightsavers also provided comments on the drafts.

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Abbreviations

CPFs  Country Partnership Frameworks
DPOs  Disabled Persons’ Organizations
DRM  Disaster Risk Management
ESF  Environmental and Social Framework
ESS  Environmental and Social Standard
GDP  Gross Domestic Product
GFDRR  Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction
ICT  Information and Communications Technology
ILO  International Labor Organization
NGO  Non-Governmental Organization
PAMSIMAS  National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project
POETA  Partnership in Opportunities for Employment through Technology in the Americas
SCDs  Systematic Country Diagnostics
SDGs  Sustainable Development Goals
SSA  Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Government of India’s Education for All program)
UN  United Nations
UNICEF  United Nations Children’s Fund
WASH  Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WHO  World Health Organization
More than a billion persons globally, about 15 percent of the world’s population, are estimated to have a disability. Most of them live in developing countries. This number is expected to increase because the prevalence of disability is affected by a range of factors, including aging, war and conflict, natural disasters, and forced displacement. Persons with disabilities face higher rates of multidimensional poverty compared with persons without disabilities. They encounter attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Persons with disabilities’ lower rates of economic and labor market participation impose a higher welfare burden on governments, highlighting the costs of exclusion, which are estimated to range from 3 to 7 percent of GDP.

Disability-inclusive development is directly responsive to the World Bank’s twin goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity. The global development and poverty reduction agenda will not be effective unless it addresses the socioeconomic inequality of persons with disabilities and ensures their participation in all stages of development programs. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is disability-inclusive and highlights the need to empower persons with disabilities. The Habitat III New Urban Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 are also explicitly disability-inclusive. The human rights of persons with disabilities to full and effective participation and inclusion in society on an equal basis with others are laid out in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is close to universal ratification.

The main objective of the Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework is to support the mainstreaming of disability in World Bank activities. It lays out a road map for (1) including disability in the Bank’s policies, operations, and analytical work; and (2) building internal capacity for supporting clients in implementing disability-inclusive development programs. The primary target audience of the framework is Bank staff, but it is also relevant to the Bank’s client countries, development partners, and persons with disabilities. The framework is a central element of an internal online resource platform that provides guidance and direction to Bank staff on disability-inclusive development. It does not have a binding status.

The framework provides four main principles for guiding the World Bank’s engagement with persons with disabilities: nondiscrimination and equality, accessibility, inclusion and participation, and partnership and collaboration. It outlines six key steps toward disability inclusion in the Bank: (1) apply a twin-track approach for recognizing persons with disabilities among the beneficiaries of all projects while also carrying out specific projects to address the main gaps to their inclusion; (2) adopt explicit references to disability in general policies, guidelines, and procedures that shape the Bank’s activities; (3) identify focus areas for disability-inclusive projects and advisory services; (4) collect data to improve the evidence base on the situation of persons with disabilities; (5) build staff capacity and organizational knowledge on disability inclusion; and (6) develop external partnerships for implementing the disability inclusion agenda.
The social inclusion of persons with disabilities denotes the process of improving their ability, opportunity, and dignity to take part in society. The World Bank’s Environmental and Social Framework stresses the need to empower persons with disabilities to participate in, and benefit from, the development process. The appendices to this framework highlight key areas in which the Bank can have a significant impact on the inclusion, empowerment, and full participation of persons with disabilities. These areas include transport, urban development, disaster risk management, education, social protection, jobs and employment, information and communication technology, water sector operations, and health care. The appendices spell out the disability relevance of each issue, refer to examples of projects in the given area, map out next steps for disability inclusion, and identify further resources. The framework is a living document that will be reviewed periodically and strengthened with new focus areas and evidence to reflect ongoing developments.