

Key Notes for the Department of Social Welfare for Persons with Disabilities

#1. Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities face greater inequalities compared to the rest of the population on almost all indicators of social, cultural, political and economic participation. The exclusion of persons with disabilities is not usually seen from a human rights perspective. However, inclusion of persons with disabilities in society has enormous social and economic benefits¹.

The inclusion of persons with disabilities means to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to basic services and opportunities. Inclusion is a human rights issue – persons with disabilities have the legal right to be included in any activities, services and opportunities. Not only is it a human rights, and a social imperative, but inclusion makes economic sense for governments and societies.

Why should the government invest in achieving inclusion of persons with disabilities?

1. Inclusion in education leads to higher employment and earning potentialⁱ

- Being included in education means persons with disabilities are more likely to enter employment and more likely to earn an income. This makes families less vulnerable to poverty and increases national economic growth. Each year that a person with a disability is in education reduces the probability of being very poor by 2-5%.
- Increasing access to education can also have positive impacts in areas such as crime reduction, family size, health, citizen participation and gender empowerment.

2. Inclusion in work and employment opportunities leads to a higher income and higher GDPⁱ

- Being excluded from employment, both formal and informal, leads to lower income for persons with disabilities and thus decreased consumption and spending in the community.
- Loss of GDP due to inactivity of persons with disabilities is large, reaching as high as 7% in low and middle income countriesⁱⁱ.
- Increasing labour force participation of persons with disabilities and their caregivers increases a country's potential tax base, which increases government revenue.
- Inclusion in employment means persons with disabilities are less dependent on social assistance, thus reducing government spending on social protection programmes.

3. Inclusion of persons with disabilities in health services reduces government health care spendingⁱ

- Inability to access and receive appropriate timely health care may result in continuously poor or worsening levels of functioning among people with disabilities – including the development of additional disabling conditions – that lead to higher personal and societal medical and productivity costs in the long term.
- Persons with disabilities that have access to assistive devices, rehabilitation and therapeutic interventions are more likely to participate in education and employment.
- If persons with disabilities are excluded from public health interventions, they may experience avoidable medical and productivity costs, and governments may end up spending more in treatment for preventable health conditions.

National and International Legislative and Frameworks / Provisions

Law on the Protection and the Promotion on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

This 2009 law states in article 2 that “persons with disabilities are included and able to fully and equally participate within society.”

National Disability Strategic Plans 2014-2018

The Strategic Plan aims that “Persons with disabilities and their families fully and equally participate in society, and their rights and dignity are respected with the disability inclusion across all sectors.”

Incheon Strategy

The Incheon Strategy was adopted specifically to “catalyse action that shall accelerate [...] the achievement of the regional vision of an inclusive society”.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The UNCRPD’s general principles includes “full and effective participation and inclusion in society”. It follows that States shall “enable persons with disabilities [...] full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life” [article 26].

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Although all goals strive for development for all persons, goal 10 specifically focuses on the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of [...] disability.

ⁱ L. Morgon Banks and S. Polack. (2014). *The Economic Costs of Exclusion and Gains of Inclusion of People with Disabilities Evidence from Low and Middle Income Countries*.

ⁱⁱ PS. Buckup. (2009). *The price of exclusion: The economic consequences of excluding people with disabilities from the world of work*. Geneva.