



Making Development Projects
Inclusive/Accessible
for Persons with Disabilities
in ODA Loan Operations

July 2006

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Inclusive Development is a part of Human Rights

Disability needs to be placed as an issue alongside others on the development agenda. To achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), socio-economic development programmes and policies must embrace the entire population, including vulnerable groups such as those with disabilities. Without integrating the disabled population, development efforts, specifically efforts to alleviate poverty, cannot be effective. Persons with disabilities face a higher risk of poverty and poor people experience a much heightened rate of disabilities.

The goal of inclusive development is the integration of people with disabilities into the social and economic life of their communities. Inclusion is prevented by barriers. They prevent people with disabilities from full participation in all areas of a community life. No distinction should be made between a disabled person's and non-disabled person's freedom to participate in every facet of life – social, economic, and political.

The international community is becoming aware of this issue. In 2001, discussions on the need for a human rights convention for persons with disabilities started at the United Nations, among governments, UN organizations, human rights bodies and disability-related organizations.

The draft text, entitled "International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Working Text"¹, clearly states that "*international cooperation, including international development programmes, are inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities*" (Draft Article 32). This convention is expected to be adopted in the

¹<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/ahc7report-e.htm>

near future.

Multilateral Development Banks also play an important role to promote inclusive development. For example, the World Bank has the Office of Disability and Development Advisor whose main priority is being proactive in generating the type of information that can make inclusive development possible. The former World Bank Group President Mr. James D. Wolfensohn mentioned "In fact, if we are to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of halving poverty by 2015, dealing with education for all, and halving the rates of birth and child mortality, it is simply impossible to conceive of doing that without the inclusion of the disabled community."

As it is becoming widely recognized that the MDGs cannot be achieved without considering the needs of persons with disabilities, it has become important to pay greater attention to this issue in order to support efforts to achieve the MDGs.

JBIC supports the efforts of developing countries to achieve the MDGs. As mentioned in the message ² of Mr. Kyosuke Shinozawa, JBIC Governor, "JBIC will continue to conduct ODA loan operations aimed at poverty reduction and sustainable growth by taking account of the Millennium Development Goals as well as international trends in aid."

*With your active involvement,
JBIC financed development
projects provide good
opportunities as a model of
inclusive, accessible and
disability-friendly development in
the country.*

²<http://www.jbic.go.jp/english/base/profile/governor/index.php>

Accessibility is a Prerequisite of Inclusive Development

In order to realize inclusive development, all development projects should be made accessible and disability-friendly for persons with disabilities. The creation of accessible environments is a very simple idea: all buildings, products and services should be designed in such a way that the number of potential users is optimized. Considering the removal of the barriers faced by persons with disabilities, four different types of barriers could be identified:

- *Physical barriers*
- *Information barriers (Braille, sign language, pictures, etc.)*
- *Legal (systemic) barriers*
- *Attitudinal barriers*



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With JBIC, Remove Barriers

If you are willing to commit to inclusive development for persons with disabilities, JBIC financed development projects provide good opportunities to remove barriers from persons with disabilities, especially physical barriers. The cost of making renovations which respond to the needs of disabled persons is very high. However, if a barrier-free design is made from the outset, the cost would be only 0.5-1% of the total cost.³

When a project to install a subway system is being formulated, for example, such disability-friendly facilities as elevators and ramps for physically disabled passengers, bulletin boards for deaf passengers, and tactile guideways for blind passengers can be taken into consideration. In this regard, Japan is a model in meeting the needs of persons with disabilities through annual campaigns for accessible public transportation which have continued for 20 years.

To install such facilities appropriately, it is recommended to listen to the voices of self-help groups of persons with disabilities, who are the potential users and should therefore understand the best method to remove physical barriers.

³ Metts, R. 2000, *Disability Issues, Trends and Recommendations for the World Bank*; Social Protection Discussion Paper No.0007, World Bank
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DISABILITY/Resources/Overview/Disability_Issues_Trends_and_Recommendations_for_the_WB.pdf

Disabled Persons' Organization as an Important Resource for Disability-Friendly Projects

Generally, disabled persons' organizations are regarded as the most qualified, most informed and most motivated to speak on their own behalf concerning the proper design and implementation of policy, legislation and strategies which will ensure their full participation in social, economic, cultural and political life and enable them to contribute to the development of their communities.

According to "Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific", which was adopted at the UN ESCAP high-level meeting in October 2002, it is targeted that *"Governments and civil society organizations should, by 2005, fully include organizations of persons with disabilities in their decision-making processes involving planning and programme implementation which directly and indirectly affect their lives."*

Useful Information for Planning Disability-friendly Projects

In order to plan a disability friendly project, the starting point should be a review of the following information:

- 1 *National Laws, Building Codes, Ordinances and Regulations in the Field of Disability*
- 2 *National Plan of Action or Development Plan*
- 3 *National Report on the Situation of Persons with Disabilities*
- 4 *List of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities*
- 5 *Local version of the UN Conventions, Norms and Standards*

Useful Resources:

JBIC: <http://www.jbic.go.jp/english/index.php>

World Bank: <http://www.worldbank.org/disability>

United Nations: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable>

DFID (UK), *Disability, Poverty and Development*: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/disability.pdf>

USAID (USA), *USAID Disability and Development*: http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/disability/index.html

JICA (Japan), *Global Issues—Disability*: <http://www.jica.go.jp/english/global/dis/index.html>