

Handout 9

STAGE TWO: THE TWIN TRACK APPROACH TO DISABILITY INCLUSIVE DEVELOPEMENT

The twin track approach recognises that development programs need to be accessible to people with a disability, but that for a proportion of people with a disability, there are also disability specific needs which have to be met to enable access to mainstream development processes. Many of these lessons are very similar to gender mainstreaming.

To achieve full inclusion and maximum participation of people with disabilities, both disability specific initiatives and disability inclusive initiatives are required.

The Twin Track Approach explained:
Why are both tracks important?

Implications of only providing Disability Specific initiatives

Example: A Disability Rehabilitation facility set up a workshop that repairs wheelchairs and makes mobility devices from locally available materials.

A self help group meets regularly in the facility who are forming a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO).

However many of the children and adults who attend the rehabilitation centre continue to be excluded from their society and the benefits of development activities happening in their community. For example:

- ▶ The neighbouring school refuses to accept children with disabilities believing they are unable to learn.

Implications of only providing Disability Mainstreaming initiatives

Example: A primary school mainstreams disability into its programs by adapting curricula and educational materials; training teachers in skills and attitudes for teaching children with disabilities; modifying the built environment around the school, employing sign language interpreters, and conducting a communication campaign to encourage parents to send children with disabilities to school. However, many children with disabilities are still not able to attend the school.

For example:

- ▶ a child with a mobility impairment cannot access the school because he does not have a wheelchair plus some basic mobility training from a rehabilitation worker.

The Twin Track Approach explained:
Why are both tracks important?

- ▶ The neighbouring school refuses to accept children with disabilities believing they are unable to learn.
- ▶ The village communities continue to judge people with disabilities and fear them.
- ▶ NGOs and governments still refuse to allow people with disabilities onto their planning committees.
- ▶ The Medical centre next door is not accessible by wheelchair. They run regular information sessions for young people on sexual and reproductive health but people with disabilities cannot access the information.

In this example, mainstreaming disability into all development programs and community services and activities are also required to enable people with disabilities to fully participate in the community.

People with disability are still excluded from the benefits of mainstream development activities despite having greater individual functional capacity.

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- ▶ a child with a hearing impairment cannot access the school because she has not had access to sign language training;
- ▶ a child with epilepsy does not have access to medication to control seizures so the parents are worried about him hurting himself at school and do not let him attend.

In this example, disability-specific activities (e.g. rehabilitation, provision of assistive devices, training in sign language) are also required to enable people to participate in mainstream development programs

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Disability specific (targeted) initiatives aim to increase the empowerment and participation of people with a disability. Any activity that focuses only on children and adults with disabilities is considered a targeted initiative. These may include:

- ▶ Support for strengthening Disabled People's Organisations
- ▶ Access to sign language, braille, assistive devices, rehabilitation
- ▶ Activities that raise awareness about rights of people with a disability (e.g. stigma reduction)
- ▶ Special education
- ▶ Income generation activities
- ▶ Community based rehabilitation

Disability Inclusive Initiatives

The disability inclusive process within the twin track approach aims to ensure that all development programs include a disability perspective and are fully accessible to all persons with disabilities. This process is also known as 'mainstreaming.'

Mainstreaming disability:

- ▶ Is the process by which the state and community ensure that disability is taken into account in all sectors, legislation, reforms and activities
- ▶ Seeks to ensure people with a disability can fully participate in and have equal access to, for example, health, education, employment, social services
- ▶ Ensures that people with disabilities' rights are protected and enabled
- ▶ Seeks to ensure people with disabilities are meaningfully involved and; represented in all stages of development program cycles.

“Mainstreaming disability into development cooperation is the process of assessing the implications for people with disabilities of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making their concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that people with disabilities benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve disability equality.”¹

The four principles of inclusive development (awareness, participation, comprehensive accessibility and twin track) can be used to mainstream disability into all development programs.

1 Albert, Bill, Dube, A.K. and Riis-Hansen, Trine Cecilie (2005) *Has Disability been mainstreamed into Development cooperation?* Disability Knowledge and Research Program. Overseas Development Group. University of East Anglia.