

COWASH

Disability Inclusion Training

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Introduction

In nowadays there is a conviction that:

- Disability is a human diversity.
- Disability is naturally occurring event and a fact of life.
- Disability is a reality in any society.

More than one billion persons in the world have some form of disability.

This corresponds to about **15%** of the world's population (World Health Organization [WHO, 2011]).

The majority of people with disabilities **(80%)** live in low- and middle-income countries and disability is believed to affect disproportionately the most disadvantaged sector of the population (Banks, Kuper, & Polack, 2017).

It is estimated that **17.6%** of the total population of Ethiopia live with various types of impairments (WHO, 2011).

For instance, in accordance to Federal Ministry of Education Annual Statistical data of 2019/2020 more than 85% of school age children with disabilities are out of school.

As a consequence, people with disabilities are more likely to experience poverty because disability causes poverty, but also because people who are poor are more likely to become disabled (WHO, 2011).

In 2004, the World Bank estimated the global GDP loss due to disability to be between \$1.71 trillion and \$2.23 trillion annually (Metts & Mondiale, 2004).

Inclusive development is that which includes and involves everyone, especially those who are marginalized and often discriminated against (United Nations Development Programme, 2010).

Disability is also a human rights issue, and this is highlighted in a range of international documents, including the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled People (WPA, 1982), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989), the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for People with Disabilities (1993), and most importantly the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006).

The UNCRPD aims to “promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.”

It reflects the major shift in global understanding and responses towards disability, and emphasizes that people with disabilities have the right for full inclusion.

1. Conceptual definition of disability and impairment

Understanding the concept of disability varies between cultures and evolves within a culture over time.

People are using the two key terms, impairments and disability interchangeably but there is a visible conceptual distinction between these terms as described hereunder:

Impairment

Impairment is the “purely factual absence of or loss of functioning in a body part.”

Hence, the term impairment is used to notify the physical condition of a person such as visual, physical, hearing, and intellectual disabilities.

It may result in activity limitation based on the degree/ severity, type and onset of the impairment.

Four broad types of impairments

1. Physical impairments: A difficulty in movement and mobility. This can be for example difficulty moving around the house, walking long distances or climbing steps; body movements like reaching or kneeling down; and using hands for gripping or using fingers. Persons with physical impairments may use assistive devices such as walking sticks, crutches or wheelchairs.

2.Sensory impairments: include visual, hearing and communication impairments.

Visual impairment is a generic terminology that comprises total blindness and low vision.

Persons with total blindness can possess information using tactile and audio-formats or media of communication.

Hearing impairment is also another generic terminology that comprises deafness and hard-of-hearing.

Persons with hearing impairments may communicate using verbal(spoken) or sign language depending on the level of their hearing capacity.

Speech impairment includes persons with difficulty in speaking or those that have difficulties in understanding other people.

3. Intellectual impairments: include persons intellectual disability and other forms of down syndrome that results in incapability in language, cognitive ability and adaptive skills.

4. Psychosocial impairment: refers to severe and chronic mental health conditions that resulted in difficulties in behaviour, emotion and social interaction.

Disability

Disability is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions.

The Preamble to the United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) acknowledges that disability is “an evolving concept,” but also stresses that “disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

An impairment becomes disabling when individuals are prevented from participating fully in society because of social, political, economic, environmental, or cultural factors.

2.Evolution of the concept of disability

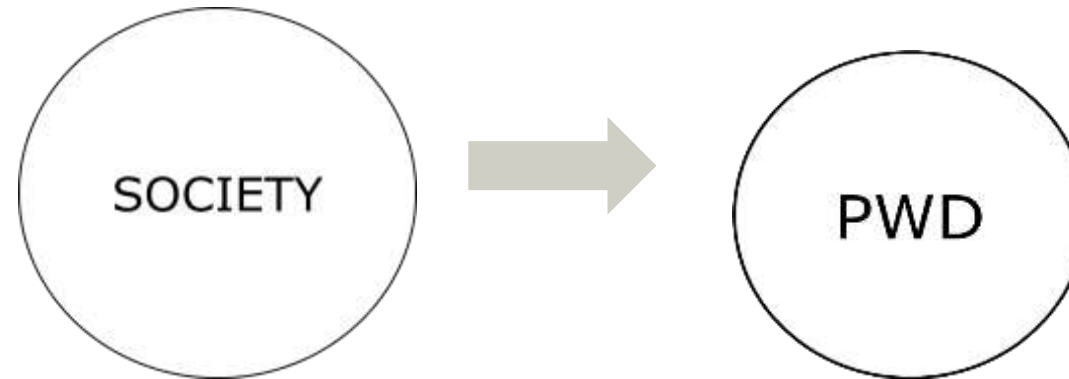
In order to understand how disability is currently viewed, it is helpful to look at the way the concept of disability has evolved over time as described below.

2.1. Traditional/Charity Model

Historically, disability was largely understood in mythological or religious terms, e.g., people with disabilities were considered to be possessed by devils or spirits; disability was also often seen as a punishment for past wrongdoing.

These views are still present today in many traditional societies.

Diagram: PWDs outside of society and society giving to PWDs

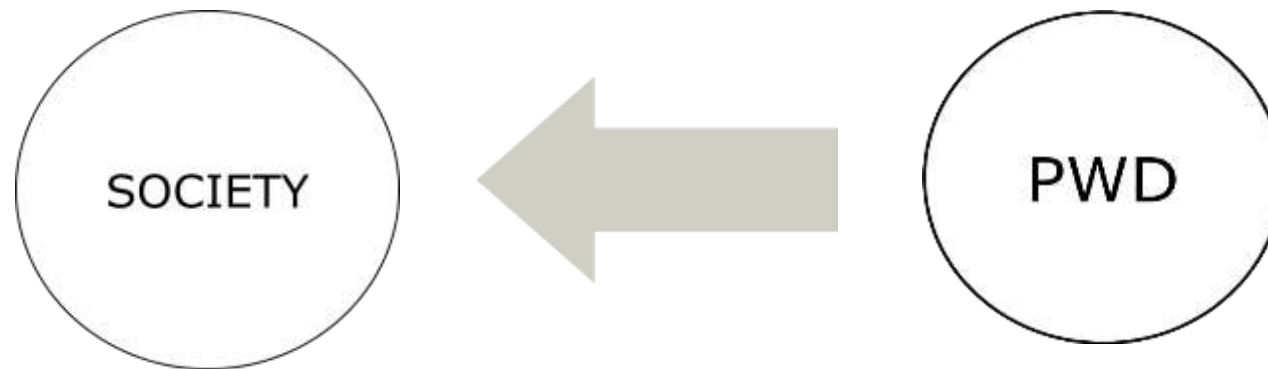


2.2. Individual/Medical Model

In the nineteenth and twentieth century's, developments in science and medicine helped to create an understanding that disability has a biological or medical basis, with impairments in body function and structure being associated with different health conditions.

This medical model views disability as a problem of the individual and is primarily focused on cure and the provision of medical care by professionals.

**Diagram: PWDs outside of society and PWDs should
adapt to fit society**



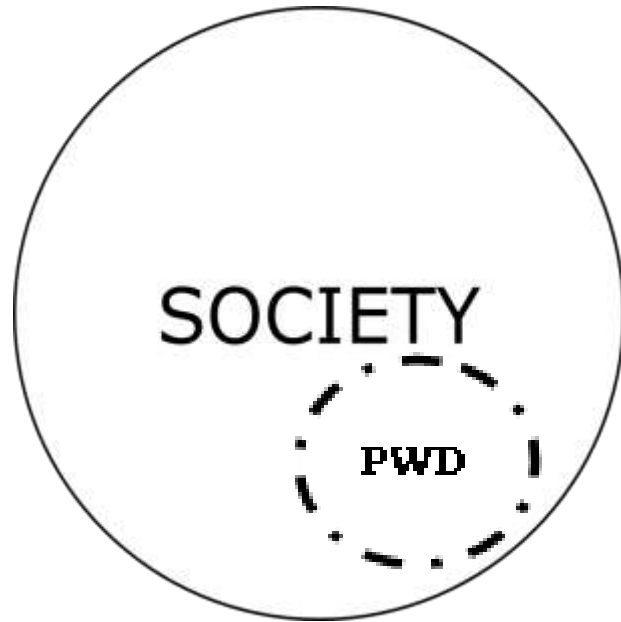
2.3. Social Model/Human Rights-Based Model

In the 1960s and 1970s, the individual and medical view of disability was challenged and a range of social approaches were developed, e.g., the social model of disability.

These approaches shifted attention away from the medical aspects of disability and instead focused on the social barriers and discrimination that people with disabilities face.

Disability was redefined as a societal problem rather than an individual problem and solutions became focused on removing barriers and social change, not just medical cure.

Diagram: PWD as part of Society



3. The principle and conceptual definition of inclusion

The principle of inclusion is simple.

It is the opposite of exclusion and also alienation.

Inclusion means that all people are entitled to full membership of the human family.

Fundamentally, inclusion is the principle that:

- We are all entitled to participate fully in all aspects of society;
- We all have the same rights and responsibilities;
- We all have something to contribute.
- Inclusion is the right of the individual and the responsibility of society as a whole.
- Inclusion requires the removal of barriers and social structures which impede participation.
- It requires proactive policy making, lateral thinking and on-going commitment.

The principle of inclusion accepts disability as human diversity.

Inclusion is not a one-time project, rather it is a process which is ultimately intended to pass through or achieve the following organically linked steps or index:

- Developing Inclusive plan or policy/legal frameworks;
- Developing Inclusive culture with in communities and institutions; and
- Evolving inclusive practice.

4. Barriers to inclusion

There are three types of barriers preventing persons with disabilities from participating in society on equal terms with non-disabled people.

- Social and attitudinal barriers
- Environmental and technical barriers, and
- Institutional barriers.

4.1. Social and attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers, prejudice and discrimination cause the biggest problems to persons with disabilities.

Disability is associated with shame, fear and/or pity, easily leading to isolation or overprotection. Disability is often also seen as a curse.

PWD are assumed incapable/inadequate; of low intelligence; in need of a 'cure'; needing 'special' services or support; dependent; or inspirational/ marvellous/ exceptional.

In order to avoid discrimination, the family may keep the person with a disability hidden at home.

Persons with disabilities may be prevented from sharing family or community facilities for fear that they will contaminate the water or soil of the facility for other users.

Negative language reflects and can reinforce prejudices

4.2. Environmental and technical barriers

Environmental barriers include natural or technical barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from participating.

For example, these barriers prevent both the access to WASH facilities and participation in WASH meetings, events and activities.

PWD encounter these barriers in areas such as: public transport, hospitals and clinics, schools and housing, shops and marketplaces, places of worship, media and communications etc.

Natural barriers include uneven, rough or steep paths on muddy and/or slippery ground.

Technical barriers include high steps and concrete platforms, narrow entrances, lack of or too heavy doors, narrow cubicles, lack of light and handrails.

4.3. Institutional barriers

Institutional barriers are related to legislation, policies and action plans.

Even if policies and legislation take persons with disabilities into account, the challenge is that they often lack directives, strategies and guidelines for implementation.

In addition, the relevant ministries/ bureaus responsible may not be aware of these policies.

Consequently, persons with disabilities are frequently left out of planning, implementation and management of WASH facilities.

Interaction between barriers and impairments

When a person with impairment faces barriers, this results in a lack of participation.

When barriers in a person's community are removed, that person with a certain type of impairment will be able to participate on an equal basis with others.

Our aim is to remove barriers to enable PWDs to participate on an equal basis with others.

Look at the following story as an example to understand about the interaction between impairment and barriers that obstruct the full and effective participation of PWDs in socio-economic activities of a given society where they live in.

Ten-year-old Mesfin's eyes are damaged = (impairment). He has difficulties in seeing = (difficulty in functioning). He could not go to school due to lack of resource to support the child and negative attitude of the teacher = (disability).

5. International and domestic, policy, legal and programmatic instruments that promote the rights of PWDs to be mainstreamed in WASH services

5.1. International Instrument Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2015 the UN set a universal agenda to end poverty, promote peace, share wealth and protect the planet by 2030.

It is known that this international instrument which comprises 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) gives specific attention for people who are the most marginalized groups with an intention to making sure the motto of the program, “no one is left behind.”

Disability is mentioned specifically in 6 development Agendas or Goals and in others relevant Goals of the program that made reference to vulnerable groups as well as “access for all” which includes persons with disabilities.

The agenda is being put into action by each member country, in partnership with all stakeholders.

Goal 6 is specifically designed to “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”.

The targets under this goal include:

- Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all;
- Realize access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and an end to open defecation;
- Pay special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations in this intervention.

These SDGs Targets are relevant and similar with WASH targets as described hereunder:

Universal: All settings including households, schools, health facilities

Equitable: Elimination of inequalities between groups of people

Accessible: Sufficient water to meet domestic needs is reliably available close to home; and sanitation facilities are close to home and can be easily reached and used when needed.

Affordable: Payment does not present a barrier to access

For all: Suitable to use by men, women, girls and boys of all ages including persons with disabilities

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006

The UN CRDP is an international human rights instrument developed to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

It was adopted in 2006 by the UN General Assembly.

The Ethiopian Parliament ratified the Convention on June 1st/ 2010 and made the law of the land by Proclamation No.676/2010 as per Article 9 (4) of the FDRE Constitution

The State parties are required to promote, and protect the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and ensure that they enjoy full equality under the law.

Article 28 of the Convention declares that governments shall ensure equal access to clean water for all.

The main principles of the Convention stated under Article 3 are:

1) Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons

1) Non-discrimination;

2) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;

3) Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;

4) Equality of opportunity;

5) Accessibility;

6) Equality between men and women;

7) Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

The UN CRPD Implementation in Ethiopia

The Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (The former Molsa) is the focal point in Ethiopia for matters related to the implementation of the Convention.

The Bureau of Women and Social Affairs of each region is responsible to implement national disability policies and promote the integration of persons with disabilities at the regional level.

All other Ministries and Bureaus (including Water, Health and Education) are also responsible as stakeholders for the implementation of the Convention, and they are required to assign focal person for disability issues.

Domestic Instruments

FDRE Constitution (1995), GoE

The Constitution emphasises equity in the provision of public services “To the extent the country’s resources permit, policies shall aim to provide all Ethiopians access to public health and education, clean water, housing, food and social security.”

“All Persons have the right to a clean and healthy environment.”

“Government shall endeavour to ensure that all Ethiopians live in a clean and healthy environment.”

Water Resources Management Policy (2001)

The Water Sector Policy does not mention specifically the inclusion of persons with disabilities, but it mentioned equity in several places.

The WASH Implementation Framework (WIF) (2011)

WIF emphasizes that the needs of persons with disabilities must be “addressed in all the steps of implementing the National WASH Program.”

WIF also states that a major responsibility of WASHCOs is developing “mechanism of addressing the disabled and marginalized groups of the community”.

WIF requires that the issue of “gender and social inclusion (disabled, disadvantaged, sick, etc.) should be mainstreamed in all WASH training, learning and exposure, and in WASH policy and planning.”

Policies, Legislations and Regulations related to Construction Works

Ethiopian Building Regulation (2011), Building Code 624/2009 and the Construction Policy of 2014 are the most important instruments in the construction sector that promote “Accessibility” for the mobility of PWDs in infrastructures constructed for public service.

Article 36 of the Building Code declares that:

- 1) Any public building shall have a means of access suitable for use by physically impaired persons, including those who are obliged to use wheelchairs and those who are able to walk but unable to negotiate steps.
- 2) Where toilet facilities are required in any building, as adequate number of such facilities shall be made suitable for use by physically impaired persons and shall be assessable to them.

Education sector development program (ESDP VI)2020/21 to 2026/27

ESDP VI recognized the issue related to wash service and accessibility to be available in schools. The statistical data reported on the document indicated that 66% of secondary school wash services are accessible for students with disabilities.

Likewise, 36% of wash service of primary schools is accessible for students with disabilities,

Question for discussion

❖ Why the inclusion of PWDs in WASH is important?

Thank You!!!