REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING GUIDELINES

"FOR A RWANDAN EMPOWERING AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY"

KIGALI, MAY 2014

INTRODUCTION

The following guidelines aim to consider all types of disabilities, including physical, intellectual, visual and hearing impairments, and a wide array of issues of importance for everyday life. However, given that it is impossible to take into account all the specificities of any type of disability and to anticipate every eventuality, we acknowledge the limitations of these guidelines as they don't cover all the possible aspects of disability mainstreaming in Rwanda.

These guidelines are not fully exhaustive: they do not cover all possible situations and not all guidelines will be applicable to every type of disability. It is also important to take into account that some types of disabilities are less visible than others and require special attention.

By "Organization" and in the context of Rwanda, we understand any ministry, government department, commission or project, private sectors constituencies, non-governmental organizations (including the disability movement) as well as local government structures.

For each organization, these guidelines can help identifying the following aspects: Disability mainstreaming: Where does the organisation fit in? Persons with disabilities and disability issues can be integrated into your organisation, areas of work, policies and practices even if it is not directly working in this field. The key is to try to look at each of the different elements of the organisation and the activities it carries out and / or supports from the disability standpoint, and from the outset whenever possible.

We encourage each organization to check if all elements recognise, respect and meet the needs of persons with disabilities – whether employees, customers or users – and if they provide the same opportunities to all citizens. This is essential as often citizens, including those with disabilities, face discrimination and social exclusion because of an environment which is not suitably adapted to their needs rather than because of their disability or specific characteristic. The challenge is to remember to be inclusive!

WHY THIS GUIDELINES

Rwanda has endorsed many legal instruments, 13 Ministerial Orders, sector policy & strategic plans are plentiful but implementation of several is still in early stages or unimplemented. Rwanda (since December 2008) ratified both the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and its optional protocol – there is clear intent to engage constructively on issues of disability. At times a technical vision of 'what to do' is weak; at others funding is held up as the key constraint.

In terms of International Legal and Policy frameworks, UNCRPD was ratified and East African Disability Policy endorsed. Domestication of these and political intent framed within: Rwanda Constitution; Law on Disability; Ministerial Orders; EDPRS 1 & 2; Policy Frameworks and Ministry Sector Strategic Plans.

In the EDPRS 2 document, disability is considered as a crosscutting issue to take into account in all programmatic areas, and it is mentioned that: "*Rwanda does not intend to leave any of its citizens behind in its development. As such, specific steps will be taken to ensure that people with disabilities (PWDs) and other disadvantaged groups are able to contribute actively to the country's development and to benefit from it*".[1]

Rwanda has committed to Mainstream disabilities in key National Development Program from 2010 to 2019. However, in general 13 Ministerial Orders are not executed.
Where Ministry and Sector strategic plans do exist (eg. Special & Inclusive Education) insufficient budget allocated & technical approach may be weak.

However, there are real opportunities for effective mainstreaming. NCPD occupies chair of Disability Coordination Forum, and there is a range of funders and development actors with interest in disability (UNICEF, VSO, My Right, JICA, HI, EU, and others…….)

Despite obvious willingness of many structures and organizations, little is known on how to go about disability-related issues. Staffs of Ministries and other Government institutions have

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[1] http://www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/General/EDPRS_2/EDPRS_2_FINAL1.pdf, p.88

identified a need for guidance and tools on Mainstreaming Disability during the consultation process on EDPRS 2, and various non-state actors have been increasingly showing an interest over the last years. It is obvious that more and more actors can significantly contribute to the mitigation of the negative impact of impairments in the Rwandan society, if they are guided not only on what should be done, but also on how to effectively proceed.

This guideline constitutes a step forward for various actors, as it proposes practical steps of mainstreaming disability in various areas of life.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CSO : Civil Society Organisation

DPO(s) : Disability People's Organisation(s)

DWCPD : Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities

EDPRS : Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy

HI : Handicap International

HVP : Home de la Vierge des Pauvres

JADF : Joint Action Development Forum

MIFOTRA : Ministry of Labour

MIGEPROF : Ministry of Gender and Promotion of Women

MINALOC : Ministry of Local Government

MINECOFIN: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

MINEDUC : Ministry of Education

MININFRA : Ministry of Infrastructure

MOH : Ministry of Health

NCPD : National Council of Persons with Disabilities

NGO : Non-Governmental Organisation

NPC : National Paralympics Committee of Rwanda

NUDOR : National Union of the Disability Organizations of Rwanda

PWD : Persons with Disabilities

RCA : Rwanda Cooperative Agency

RHA : Rwanda Housing Authority

SACCO : Savings and Credit Cooperative

SNE : Special Needs Education

TOT : Training of Trainers

UNCRPD : United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Mainstreaming means including into the main streams. Thus disability mainstreaming means introducing the inclusion perspective/aspect of disability into the main social streams (UNDP Disability Awareness Training)

Disability mainstreaming is a process that promotes **inclusion** and addresses the barriers that exclude persons with disabilities from full and equal participation in society.

Mainstreaming disability is not about adding a component of people with disabilities or even equality, empowerment or rights component into an existing activity; it goes beyond increasing their participation; it means bringing the experience, knowledge, and interests of people with disabilities to bear on the development agenda. It may entail identifying the need for changes in that agenda. It may require changes in goals, strategies, and actions so people with disabilities (both women and men) can influence, participate in, and benefit from development processes.

Programme mainstreaming

The process of ensuring that the organisation's programmes and services are inclusive, equitable and non-discriminatory, and do not create barriers or reinforce the negative effects of the issue. As well as looking at **program design and service delivery**, this means including excluded people in programs planning, implementation, management and reviewing.

Mainstreaming Disability in programmes

Mainstreaming Disability in Programs involves non-disability service providers and development organisations including persons with disabilities on an equitable basis, in the same settings as non-persons with disabilities. This is famously summed up in the rallying cry of the worldwide disability movement 'Nothing about us without us'.

Meaningful involvement of people directly affected by the issue is essential element of mainstreaming.

Gender must also be incorporated as key element in the mainstreaming process. Women with disabilities are doubly discriminated against, as a person with disability and as women. It is

essential that our mainstreaming activities take this into account and include women in an equitable and non-discriminatory way.

Basic principles of mainstreaming

The basic principles of mainstreaming are:

- The responsibility for mainstreaming is system-wide and rests at **all levels and across all spheres** of government, sectors and civil society organizations.

- Appropriate and adequate **accountability** mechanisms for monitoring progress must be strengthened.

- The initial identification of issues and problems across all area(s) of activity should be such that **differences and disparities can be diagnosed.**

- Clear **political will and allocation of adequate resources** for mainstreaming, including additional financial and human resources if necessary are important for translation of the concept into practice.

- Mainstreaming requires that efforts be made to broaden **participation** at all levels of decision-making.

- Mainstreaming **does not replace the need for targeted disability-specific policies, programmes and legislation**; nor does it do away with the need for specialized units or focal points.

Pillars for mainstreaming

The diagram below depicts an approach to mainstreaming with respect to the foundation principles or pillars.

The four pillars that inform and guide the mainstreaming agenda.
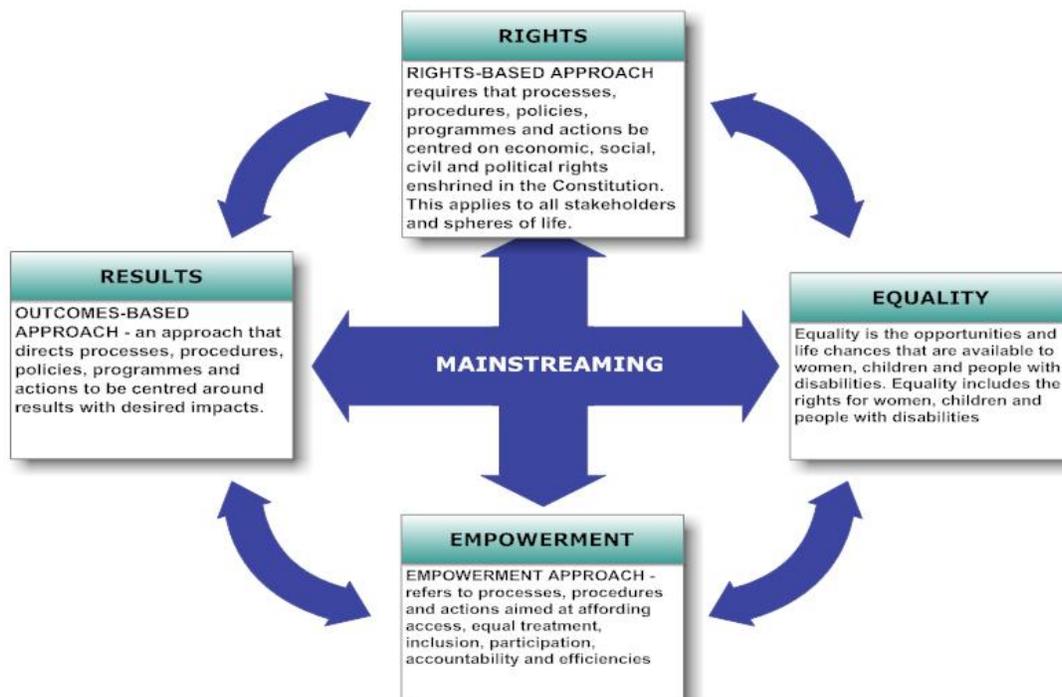
Source: NCPD

Levels of disability mainstreaming

Source:NCPD

The three levels are considered in other to mainstream Disability in Development agenda.

The mainstreaming Levels are presenting and pursuing the economic and social Development of Persons with Disabilities in the agenda and providing inputs to the High-level Meeting organised and presents selected examples of advances made at the International, Regional and National Levels in mainstreaming Disability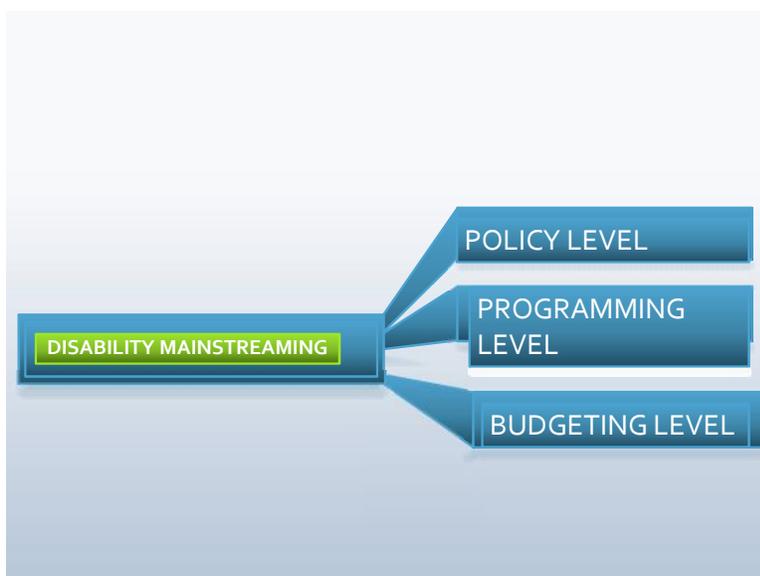 with involving policy Frameworks for inclusive development. The **follow-up strategies** must be introduced at all levels and suggests elements for inclusion in such strategies. Also in mainstreaming process the specific recommendations must be provided on actions at national, regional and global level to promote the effective implementation of the outcomes of the high-level meetings for stakeholders (e.g.: Members states, the United Nationals System, civil society and all other stakeholders).

The first stage is based on matter to increase in the trend towards the formulation of policies and guidelines on disability inclusive development cooperation focus on the implementation of policies frameworks in other to contribute to the promotion of disability inclusion in development programming at international, regional and national level.

The second stage is based on introducing measures to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities through increasing the number of member's states and including harmonization of domestic legislation and implementation of national policies and programs and other appropriate measures to promote and to protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

The third stage is related for progressing mainstreaming program in developing and strengthening both national policy frameworks and programmes to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.

This stage must include the drafting and implementation of action plans and strategies, tailored to their specific national contexts, to close the gap between the registration and practice, based on the principle of inclusive development. These reflect on setting up targets for implementation and outline a projected budget of resources that would need to be invested to achieve the targets in each of the key sector.

Steps for an organisation to embark on Disability Mainstreaming

There are 3 steps to consider with regards to disability mainstreaming:

Step 1: Evaluation

To start the refection process and try to understand where the organization is, look at areas such as the following:

Aspect to consider	Key elements to take into account
Staff composition	How many persons with disabilities work at the organisation?
	At what levels are they employed?
	What are their main areas of responsibility?
Understanding of disability issues	Are the organisation's staffs aware of the importance of disability issues?
	Is there any training organised about this?
Flexible work options for persons with disabilities (PWDs) and staff members responsible for taking care of PWDs	Do they exist?
	How many people take advantage of them?
Provision of equal opportunities :	Is there equal pay as well as fair and equal opportunities for training and access to career opportunities within the organisation for all staff members?
Consideration of disability issues in the provision of support :	Do you require that organisations take into account equality and / or disability issues when providing them with support?[2]
Partnerships with organisations active in the disability field :	Are you involved in partnerships with organisations of persons with disabilities and / or representing them, or others active in this area, in order to gain a better knowledge of the disability field?
Services for all	Do persons with disabilities benefit from the activities and services of your organisation?
	If not, why? What measures could be taken to ensure they do?

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[2] For institutions and organizations providing a certain kind of support to other smaller constituencies

Step 2 : Strategy

Following an analysis of the current situation in the organisation regarding equality and disability issues, the following steps could be considered:

✄ Define a strategy of action in this field.

This strategy could be reflected in a simple statement of organisational commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all people, and in particular persons with disabilities – be they staff, users or customers – or a more formal disability / equality plan, including objectives and targets, a code of practice.

✄ Promote measures to enhance non discrimination and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities among staff and partners and involve the relevant stakeholders in their definition and implementation.

✄ Appoint a disability champion to help manage diversity and to provide other members with relevant information such as articles, policy developments, guidebooks, and so on.

Step 3 : Implementation

Below are some more practical ideas to help any organisation to take into consideration and integrate persons with disabilities and disability-related issues in the following areas:

✄ Employment
✄ Education and Training
✄ Goods and Services
✄ Health care
✄ Justice
✄ Sport and Leisure activities
✄ Financial services and funding
✄ Housing
✄ Mainstreaming into national development processes

It also includes a section on horizontal issues that apply to all areas. Horizontal issues analysed include the promotion of access and accessibility for all as well as the consultation and involvement of people

With disabilities and the organisations representing them in all activities and at all stages. Some of the practical tips and ideas proposed are easy to implement; others may require further efforts and more time. Should it be necessary, do not hesitate to phase in the changes and proceed step by step. NCPD is Convinced that many of these guidelines could also benefit other groups that often face discrimination such as elderly people or people with temporary impairments, e.g. a person with a broken leg.

PART I. Disability Mainstreaming in Employment

Participation in employment is crucial not only for earning an income, but more importantly because it enables active participation in society. For persons with disabilities, this is a challenge as they face significant barriers with regard to both job seeking and job retention. For example in Europe, a person within the active age range (16-64 years) has a 66 % probability of finding a job or developing a business. For a person with a moderate disability this probability falls to 47 %, and for a person with a severe disability the probability is reduced to a mere 25 %. In addition, employment opportunities are even lower for certain groups of persons with disabilities, for example women. The equivalent statistics are 44 % for females with a moderate disability and 25 % for those with a severe disability.[3] In addition to these worrying trends, a high proportion of disabled workers also belong to the low paid jobs category, and disabled workers are discriminated when it comes to gaining promotion and accessing further training. The situation of those people that become disabled during their career should also be considered. We do not have statistics on the employment of PWDs in East Africa in general and in Rwanda in particular, but it is commonly acknowledged that their access to employment opportunities is very low.

Another target group that should be taken into consideration are the often forgotten family members that are responsible for taking care of persons with disabilities, in particular parents (mostly mothers) of moderately and severely disabled children, who often have to leave the labour market in order to care for their children because existing care and support services inadequately meet their needs.

Policies that take into account the specific needs of these groups must be put in place.[4]

In Rwanda, the article 18 of the Presidential Order Nº46/01 of 29/07/2011 governing modalities for the recruitment, appointment and nomination of public servants, offers a great opportunity, though limited to the public sector:
"**If two candidates obtain equal marks on one given post and in case one of the candidates is a person with disabilities, the latter shall be given the priority. If two candidates with disabilities obtain equal marks on the same vacant post, the experience shall be taken into consideration. If they have the same experience, the principle of gender equality shall be considered**".

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[3] From the European Community Household Panel
[4] In June 2006, MIFOTRA has worked on a five years plan for the promotion of employment of PWDs, unfortunately this plan was never validated nor disseminated

1.1. Challenges

In many cases the unemployment or inactivity of persons with disabilities does not relate to the impossibility of persons with disabilities to work but to other issues related to their personal background or to the work environment. These include the lack of adequate education and training, workplaces not adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities, employer and colleagues' prejudices and a lack of support and guidance for employers, disabled employees and other staff members.

A growing number of organisations are realising that there are several ethical, economic, legal and business reasons to address diversity and disability issues in their activities and are choosing to adopt strategies in the area, in many cases incorporating them into their global diversity strategies. Benefits Include an improved corporate image and reputation; enhanced employee recruitment and retention, through access to a wider pool of highly skilled and motivated workers that otherwise would not be attracted; creation of environments that promote inclusion and respect; and the promotion of a highly skilled, innovative and diverse workforce. Sometimes, the integration of disability issues into the mainstream processes will be easy. In other cases, some further changes and reasonable accommodations will be needed. We understand by reasonable accommodation any change or adjustment to a job, the work environment or the way things usually are done that would allow a person with a special need / requirement to apply for a job, perform job functions, or enjoy equal access to benefits available to other individuals in the workplace.

1.2. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges

The following guidelines and tips are addressed to managers and staff members of organisations as well as persons interested in starting their own business. They will also be useful for external stakeholders such as employment policy-makers and private sector. Here are some actions that organisations can undertake to mainstream disability into their structures and activities. Similar actions could also be undertaken for ensuring equal opportunities for other groups that often suffer discrimination.

- Review organisational employment policies and practices to ensure that persons with disabilities encounter no direct or indirect discrimination or barriers in relation to recruitment, job retention
- and career development.

- If necessary, set up a concrete plan and clear procedures regarding the employment of persons with disabilities, including objectives, targets, monitoring and evaluation. A similar exercise can be carried out for ensuring equal opportunities for other groups that often suffer discrimination.[5]

- Where possible, ensure that persons with disabilities have access to quality employment and to high-level positions.

- Help to break down job segregation by opening up sectors that are normally closed to persons with disabilities.

- Do not limit diversity and inclusion issues and measures to the human resources section of your organisation and to staff members working in this department. Make them applicable to all areas and levels of your organisation and communicate these principles to staff, customers, and other stakeholders.

- Given that the lack of information and awareness of diversity issues has proven to be the biggest challenge for workplace diversity, provide information and, where necessary, equality and diversity training for senior managers and staff to increase their insight into and awareness of disability issues and help them to understand the requirements and benefits of a diverse workforce.

- You can also provide managers with a series of tools and resources such as performance planning frameworks, diversity checklists, and toolkits to support them in policy implementation.

- Use positive images showing persons with disabilities in active roles in your publications (newsletters, brochures on good practice, reports / studies, websites) and in interviews, documentaries, editorials, opinion pieces, etc. Always include news items on equal opportunities in the organisation publications.

- Offer work placements for persons with disabilities who have just finished their studies or have not had an opportunity to gain work experience during their academic training. This strategy allows to test a person's skills and ability before committing to employing him / her permanently and allows persons with disabilities to have their first experience in the labour market, an opportunity that it is often difficult to obtain.

- Introduce measures that reconcile professional and family life in order to support parents of children with disabilities.

- ❖ Make recruitment advertising disability friendly in the following ways:

- When disseminating information, ensure that it is fully accessible : disseminate it by various means and in various formats, including where possible easy-to-read format ; use legible and understandable language ; if internally you pin details onto notice boards, pin them at a height where they can be seen by wheelchair users and people of less than average height, etc.

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[5] MIFOTRA draft policy on employment of persons with disabilities

- When advertising the position by e-mail or via a website, make sure that the website or e-mails used are accessible. Research suggests that, although these methods of communication are acceptable for some persons with disabilities, many are excluded because of inaccessible and / or badly designed e-recruitment tools.
- Be careful with wording: ensure that it is not discriminatory or inadvertently discouraging.
- Consider the specifications and criteria that you are asking for. They must be relevant and essential for performing the job and must not place people with a disability or long-term health condition at a disadvantage in the selection process. For this purpose, make the distinction between essential and minor requirements that could be reassigned to another person ; do not include blanket requirements or exclusions related to health or disability ; and request qualifications only where there is a genuine occupational requirement and there is no other way to meet the criteria.
- Make sure that the advertisement reaches persons with disabilities. To this end, you can consider sending it to organisations helping persons with disabilities to look for employment or those representing and / or offering services to them ; publishing it in specialist disability publications or those often read by persons with disabilities ; sending it to specific e-recruitment websites that link persons with disabilities with employers.
- Make sure that your job advertising scheme is designed to attract persons with disabilities. Consider including a welcoming and encouraging statement for persons with disabilities in your advertisements. If you have specific policies regarding the recruitment and employment of PWDs, e.g. a specific interview scheme for persons with disabilities, include a reference to it.

Organisations such as UNDP, Handicap International and others put a mention on equal opportunities for PWDs in their jobs adverts.

Illustrations drawn from the organisations' job adverts

- ✓ Conformément à la loi en vigueur, les personnes handicapées seront prioritaires en cas de compétence professionnelle égale ou de même note à l'issue des tests écrits et entretiens (Handicap International Rwanda)[6]
- ✓ UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.[7]

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[6] http://imbere.com/Amatangazo/Akazi-n-amasoko/article/2-Stages-professionnel-a-Handicap-International-Kigali-Rwanda#sthash.MIJjdLuQ.dpuf, viewed on June 2nd, 2013
[7] http://jobs.undp.org/cj_view_job.cfm?cur_job_id=38463, viewed on June 2nd, 2013

- Application forms should be made available in alternative formats and reference should be made to this in the advertisement. Required formats will depend on the individual's needs, personal preferences and access to technology. Stipulating that applications can only be accepted in handwriting would discriminate against some people. Make sure applicants are given space to provide information about alternative work-related experiences as some may not have the possibility to follow strictly traditional paths in terms of academic and professional training.

❖ **Considerations with regard to the selection process**

- Mainstream selection processes should be adapted so that persons with disabilities can participate in them equally. In order to do so, ensure that the whole recruitment process can be adapted to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.
- The main types of arrangements will involve overcoming problems associated with physical features of the premises, e.g. by using the ground floor for the interview if other floors are not accessible and providing accessible car parking, and secondly take steps to adapt the interview itself to the persons with disabilities' needs, e.g. by using an induction loop or sign language / oral interpreters if an interview is to be carried out with a person with hearing impairment, allowing extra time for the candidate to complete the test, accepting a lower pass rate for a person whose impairment inhibits performance in such a test where this is unlikely to harm performance in the actual job.
- If that is not possible, as a last resort, put in place a recruitment competition for persons with disabilities, as a positive action measure. Organisations might consider undertaking such a competition in partnership with other organisations in the same sector or geographical area so as to share the additional recruitment and related costs involved and to secure a sufficient public profile for the initiative to attract as broad a field of candidates as possible.
- To know whether special arrangements are needed, in all application forms and letters of invitation to interviews, ask candidates if they have any specific needs that should be met to allow them to attend and take part in the interview. It might be useful to inform applicants about the types of test that will be carried out so that they can indicate whether adjustments are necessary.
- For example, if applicants have to use any ICT during the selection procedure, make sure you have the appropriate equipment or software.
- When evaluating a person with disabilities, consider how reasonable adjustments could enable the person to meet the requirements of the job. Also bear in mind that making a decision based on a person's sickness record can discriminate unfairly.
- Keep in mind that some frequently used criteria may be discriminatory. For example, asking for experience in the use of a particular type of computer software can exclude some people. Many persons with disabilities use adapted technology with specifically tailored software. It may have a different name but could carry out the same function as more common software packages.

- During the interview, provide as much visual information as possible for those persons with hearing impairments or intellectual disabilities, keep eye-to eye contact, have appropriate lighting and have paper and pencil near in case it is necessary to write things down.
- Do not ask for qualifications that are not relevant to or significant for a particular job. In many cases, persons with disabilities do not have general qualifications, if for example they attended a special school where the opportunity to attain a particular qualification was not available. They may, nevertheless, have equivalent competence derived from work or life experiences.

❖ **Decisions not based on assumptions.**

People involved in the selection process should be aware (and ideally be trained) about equality and disability-related issues and policies.

In terms of job development and retention (training and career development), the following Considerations should be kept in mind:

- Some of the key elements for achieving effective job development and retention are the following: individual follow-up ; employer-employee dialogue ; and job description revision or job reassignment.
- Make reasonable modifications for employees with disabilities in order to meet their needs and to ensure that they are not excluded by physical, systemic, attitudinal or communication
- barriers (e.g. ICT support, sign language support, interpretation, use of vibrating or light signals to warn workers, telephone signals that flash a light when it sounds, physical obstacles signals, noise reduction for workers with hearing difficulties, adaptation of intercom systems).[8]There are easy ways to do this. For example : improvements in decoration and signage on premises that could help people with sensory impairments or learning difficulties.
- These changes are beneficial to all staff, not only to those with disabilities.
- Make sure that workers with disabilities can enjoy the same benefits that other workers have, such as health programmes, recreational and social activities, etc.
- Whenever necessary, adopt support measures to accompany persons with disabilities in their working life, e.g. personalised plans, appointing a staff member to support the new employee, and offering flexible working hours.
- Bear in mind that some persons with disabilities may take longer to settle into a job than other employees, even when reasonable efforts have been made to accommodate them.
- Ask the worker how she / he prefers to communicate and what measures could ease their work – some people with hearing difficulties would prefer written communication, while others would rather use visual signs.

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[8] Though some of the proposed adaptations are expensive, others just require an adaptation and could be easily acquired or integrated into existing features, especially for important organisations (communication companies, public institutions such as Rwanda Revenue Authority,...)

- Encourage persons with disabilities to be independent and confident, and develop measures that prevent resentment by other colleagues.
- Make sure that the same career opportunities and possibilities of having a stable job are available to both disabled and non-persons with disabilities.
- Facilitate the retention of existing employees who acquire a disability during their working life.

❖ **Considerations for self-employment and business start-ups**

The tools which service and finance providers rely on to assess business startups and their needs do not reflect the present diversity of potential entrepreneurs because they are based on traditional profiles and outdated criteria. However, according to several recent studies, the number of persons with disabilities in self-employment is higher than that of the general public. In addition, self-employment is a viable option for many persons with disabilities who require more flexible working arrangements. Below are some measures that could be taken to help unlock the potential of persons with disabilities to become entrepreneurs :

- The provision of financial assistance and other aid.
- The promotion of access to training and support in this field. Currently, access is difficult due to, for example, the lack of advertising about available services ; a lack of accessible transport / funding for transport to and from places where the information can be obtained and advice provided; training provided in inaccessible venues or not tailored to meet individual needs.
- The development of initiatives to promotion entrepreneurship such as mentoring and peer support networks or incubation support services to support start-up businesses.
- The promotion of positive role models of entrepreneurship among disadvantaged social groups.
- The provision of incentives for PWDs who want to embark on businesses, taxes waives, start-ups,...

❖ **Work in partnership with civil society organisations, especially the Rwandan disability movement, to develop innovative ways to promote the integration of persons with disabilities into mainstream employment.**

❖ **Get involved in schemes that help persons with disabilities to get integrated into the ordinary work environment.**

An example of these mechanisms is the mentoring schemes. Mentoring is the process by which a more experienced person (a mentor) provides guidance in the form of training and support to a less experienced person (a mentee). Mentoring has proven to be a successful mechanism for achieving better integration of persons with disabilities in many fields, and particularly in the labour market. Mentoring schemes have a wide range of benefits for all parties:

- Mentees with different types of disabilities can obtain practical skills and knowledge in a real working atmosphere. They can develop their abilities and increase their overall self-confidence.
- Employers can get to know persons with disabilities and observe good practices and techniques that compensate for possible shortcomings caused by the disabilities.
- Staff can overcome prejudice and reservations towards persons with disabilities and develop a more positive attitude towards them.

NB: In some countries, financial support schemes or other types of support exist to facilitate employment of persons with disabilities, the government supports the hiring of persons with disabilities by awarding grants to cover the ICT-adapted equipment required for these persons' work ("Access to Work" scheme).

Part II. Disability Mainstreaming in Education and training

Education is widely recognised as a means to develop human capital, to improve economic performance and to enhance people's capabilities and choices. Equipping people with the necessary skills and qualifications is a key prerequisite for full inclusion in society. Thus the importance of ensuring education for all people, including persons with disabilities. This goes from basic education to life-long learning opportunities and for all ages. On the other hand, it is proven that a system where priority is given to inclusive education at all ages, in which both disabled and non-persons with disabilities can benefit from the same educational environment, is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities and building an inclusive society. However, despite increased efforts in recent years, persons with disabilities do not have equal access to education and training opportunities. Significant numbers of disabled children and youth are still largely excluded from educational opportunities at the primary and secondary school levels or lag behind their non-disabled peers in high school completion and higher education. Consequently, they find it more difficult to have access to employment opportunities later in life, and therefore also to become financially and socially independent, which in turn prevents them from participating fully in society. Disabled adults do not have the same access to lifelong learning opportunities (programmes ranging from short courses to advanced or further education to continued training), which are key to continued enhancement of their skills and abilities and therefore their career prospects.

2.1. Challenges

Key challenges
include:
- Accessibility of the environment (infrastructures) where the education / training takes place.
- Teaching methods and materials not adapted to the needs of students with special needs.
- Lack of support tools.
- Lack of awareness, knowledge and understanding among teachers and students regarding disability issues and how to deal with disabled students;
- Avoid negative perceptions towards PWDs in schools.

2.2. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges

In this context, it is of key importance to promote and implement the necessary measures to enable all students, including those with special educational needs, to benefit from equal access to and enjoyment of education, either general or specifically tailored, within inclusive settings. Although priority should be given to inclusion in the mainstream education system, special education schemes should be used when skills cannot be acquired through the mainstream system or when it is the decision of the person with disabilities, supported if necessary by his / her family.

It has been proven that most persons with disabilities could have equal access to education, be it general or specialised, if they are provided with the necessary support.

The following guidelines are addressed to any person or public / private organisation involved in the promotion, support or development of training opportunities for persons with disabilities or those directly involved in their implementation (such as teaching staff). They will also be of interest for stakeholders in charge of making decisions in this field as well as for students interested in knowing more about how to better deal with their disabled colleagues. The following list is an outline of suggestions for change :

❖   In your activities, promote the rights of all persons with disabilities to education, irrespective of the nature of their impairment.

❖   When you organise mainstream education, training and lifelong learning schemes, ensure that, where possible from the outset, they are designed in a way that everybody (disabled and non-disabled) can equally participate in and benefit from them. For example:
  • Physical settings or where activities take place: make sure that the venues are fully accessible.
  • Information and educational material: ensure that all relevant information and materials are accessible by taking into account the needs of people with different types of disabilities. For example : provide materials beforehand ; for people with visual impairments, provide as many materials as possible in CD or Braille speak so that they can read them on their computers ; provide easy-to-read materials for people with intellectual disabilities.
  • Lessons / courses : provide support, such as interpretation facilities and induction loop systems ; permit entry of volunteers and guide dogs (so far less used in Rwanda and East Africa); allow students to record lessons and to use technical aids ; for the benefit of people with visual impairments, whatever you write on the board, also read it orally and when showing pictures, explain what they show, etc.
  • Exams / tests : where appropriate, offer persons with disabilities and / or special needs the possibility of having the exam in different formats and give them the opportunity to be tested in different ways, e.g. orally, in writing, by computer. Whenever necessary, provide them with more time to complete the exam. These exemptions should not appear on their certificate.

❖ Special education should only be organised when mainstream education is not suitable

❖ for persons with disabilities to acquire the necessary skills, or when persons with disabilities or their families decide to opt for it. The possibility to opt for special education is important for some types of disability, i.e. deaf-blind children, and severe intellectual disability as they could not follow mainstream education. However, this special education should aim to compensate for, reduce, or remedy their disability and should always offer them the possibility to move into mainstream education.

❖ Take the necessary measures to raise awareness among non-disabled peers about disability issues. This will help to create an inclusive environment where disabled and non-persons with disabilities are fully integrated.

❖ Encourage and facilitate the participation of parents, communities, and organisations of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision-making processes concerning the provision of special educational needs.

❖ Take the necessary measures to make sure that disabled students can also participate in the school or institution extracurricular activities and social life.

❖ Consult user organisations active in the disability field in all matters relating to the organisation and delivery of provisions.

❖ In the case of persons with disabilities that need assistance from their families / social environment to take decisions, consult, involve and provide support and guidance to parents, and others responsible for both disabled and non-disabled children, so that they are informed about the process of inclusion, its rationale and the potential benefits that will accrue to their child.

❖ Take full advantage of technological developments in your training programmes. They have the potential for both improving and obstacling the opportunities of persons with disabilities for participating in education and training.

Therefore, special attention should be given to :
- Training in new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).
- Use of these technologies for education and training.
- Ensuring that ICT and the places where they are located are designed to enable people with all sorts of special needs to use them. Attention must be paid to the fact that people with certain

disabilities may need special training software or conversion software that adapts programmes to meet their specific needs. They may also need special training courses in the use of equipment and software.

❖ Assist teaching staff to gain the relevant qualifications, insight and understanding on disability issues. Inclusion largely depends on teachers' attitudes and motivation and on the resources available to them. However, teachers generally lack training or any type of preparation for working in an inclusive environment and lack the necessary resources. As such, in many cases, they do not know how to cope with the presence of people with special needs at school.

❖ Disability equality training should be integrated into college training and the continued development of professionals active in teaching environments. In addition, teachers working with students with special needs should acquire specific competences in relevant areas. This preparation could be completed in cooperation with disabled learners themselves.

❖ The role of universities in general and university foundations in particular, with their potential to mainstream disability-linked issues into their different activities, deserves a special mention. University foundations contribute to the development of the general goals of the university by building bridges between the university and society and ensuring that the university contributes to the creation of a better society through teaching, research, and innovation programmes. Universities can play an important role by :

- Facilitating and promoting the inclusion of students, teachers and employees with disabilities.
- Promoting awareness-raising activities for students and staff.
- Including disability-related issues in education and training programmes (theoretical and practical) of all relevant professionals that may be dealing with persons with disabilities in the future.
- Increasing research, development and innovation (R+D+I) focused on disability-related issues, as well as providing new knowledge and carrying out studies related to this field.
- Promoting Long Life Learning (LLL) of persons with disabilities and professionals who care for them.
- Promoting innovation and collaboration with organisations of persons with disabilities, launching collaborative programmes to drive their proficiency and promoting the innovation of models, products, and services.
- Rendering the infrastructures accessible by all types of disabilities;
- Positive promotion for some students with disabilities (optional)

Part III. Disability Mainstreaming in goods and services

The number of users of goods and services both with both disabilities – lifelong and temporary – or with impairments, such as the elderly, is growing rapidly. In many cases, these users have trouble in getting access to and fully enjoying the goods and services available in our society because they are conceived, produced, or provided in a way that is adapted only to the requirements of the so called "standard person" and not adapted to society as a whole. Against this background, and in addition to it being a human rights issue, it is of extreme importance for society as a whole to ensure more inclusive and user-friendly goods and services that can be used by all people, including people with and without disabilities. It is also in the interest of service suppliers – anyone providing a service to the public in general or to a section of the public – to take into consideration the needs and requirements of persons with disabilities and / or with impairments. They represent an increasingly significant share of the market in terms of both number - making up more than 10 % of the population- and consumer influence. Consequently, by ensuring that these customers can have access and can use and enjoy any goods and services offered by society, service suppliers will be opening up a new market share and contributing to enhancing their reputation.

3.1. Challenges

The main challenges encountered by persons with disabilities arise from a lack of knowledge and understanding about disability issues and the needs of persons with disabilities and are in many cases Unintentional. They include:

❖ A lack of accessibility in the way in which goods and services are designed, produced and provided, for example :
  - Physical accessibility : Lack of accessibility regarding the premises where goods and services are
  - Provided and the routes leading to them.
  - Information: Lack of accessible and user-friendly information on goods and services.
  - Mechanisms and procedures for the provision of goods and services : often too rigid and unaccommodating to people with special needs.
  - Communication: personnel speaking too quickly or incomprehensibly.

❖ Attitudes : The attitudes of persons involved in the design, production and provision of goods and services as well as society as a whole lead to the creation of unnecessary barriers due to patronising Attitudes and assumptions about people's abilities and inabilities and the use of inappropriate and disrespectful language, among other reasons.

There is a testimony of a person with disabilities who entered into a shop in "Quartier Matheus" to buy something, and the shop owner gave her a coin of one hundred Rwandan francs, assuming that by the fact she was disabled, she was coming for begging.

3.2. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges

In order to create an inclusive society and ensure that all people can enjoy the goods and services offered, the needs and requirements of persons with disabilities and / or with impairments must be accommodated at all stages of design, production and delivery to ensure that they are not unintentionally discriminated against. A number of studies and experiences show that many of these barriers can be Overcome through simple, practical, and reasonable measures. A high percentage of the arrangements involve low or no cost at all. In many cases, solutions can be included in regular routines. In others, reasonable accommodation and positive action to promote equal opportunities for the special needs of disabled customers can help organisations deal with this challenge.

The key is not to wait until a person with disabilities cannot use your service, but rather to anticipate the need yourself! The following guidelines and tips are addressed to stakeholders involved in the design, production and / or provision of goods and services, be it at the level of decision-making or implementation. They will also be of interest for stakeholders involve in the development and approval of policies in this area. Here are some practical tips to overcome the main barriers:

- ❖ Apply the Design-for-All methodology to the design, production and delivery of your goods and services as follows :
  - Designing products, services and applications that are readily usable by most of the potential users without any modification.
  - Making products, services and applications easily adaptable to different users, e.g. by adapting their user interfaces.
  - Having standardised interfaces that are compatible with special products, e.g. special interaction devices for persons with disabilities.

- ❖ Develop strategies to help staff of the organisation tackle the challenge of dealing with persons with special needs.
  These include:

- Training and support for staff to build awareness and skills needed to deal with this group of customers in a confident, respectful and courteous manner, i.e in a way they are treated as equal citizens with the same rights and obligations as everyone. Training can be provided by external organisations or internally and can consist of stimulating informal debate on the issue and how to address it.
- Raising awareness about the organisation's commitment to persons with disabilities and about the disability-friendly features of the premises and the goods and/or services offered among staff and other members and partners of the organisation.
- Including in the customer service and safety plans a section regarding persons with disabilities

❖ If necessary, request an internal or external person to undertake an access audit on elements such as policies and practices, service delivery structures, information material used and the decision-making processes of the organisation.

❖ Ask for feedback and ideas and whenever appropriate, involve users with disabilities and the organisations representing them, at all stages of the design, production and / or provision process so that they can express what they want from the service provided. This will help to evaluate the extent to which current schemes are meeting their needs and preferences and to shape the design of new ones. This activity could be done through consultation exercises, focus groups, comment / suggestion cards / boxes, website questionnaires, customer panels, regular meetings with customers with disabilities or representative organisations or by simply asking the organisation's customers with disabilities. It should be a two-way communication process.

❖ Communicate and raise awareness about the disability-friendly features included in the design, production and delivery of goods and services through disability organisations, the media, and other channels.

Part IV. Disability Mainstreaming in Health care

The current health care model is primarily designed for the "average person", and thus presents significant barriers for persons with disabilities in terms of access to appropriate services since they do not fully comply with what are considered "normal standards". In addition, although persons with disabilities are not and do not consider themselves unhealthy, in many cases they require specific, regular and more intense health care assistance than other citizens. The health system does not seem to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, which can vary considerably according to the type of impairment or severity of disability. In many cases, the disability is not even taken into account because health care professionals do not know how to deal with it.

4.1. Challenges

The following appear to be the greatest challenges to equal access:

- Financial: high cost of necessary care.
- Physical: physical inaccessibility of many health services.
- Service provision: lack of availability of community-based provisions.
- Barriers to information: lack, or inaccessibility, of information about what is available.
- Attitudinal, communication and social barriers manifested through, for example, attitudes of medical professionals that may even be discriminatory. For instance, in many cases, when assisting people
- with disabilities, medical personnel talk with their parents or with the persons assisting them rather than with the disabled individuals themselves, who as a consequence will find themselves excluded from their own treatment and unable to express their needs.
- Knowledge: a lack of knowledge on the parents' part of how to protect their children's health and on the part of professionals regarding the needs of persons with disabilities.

4.2. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges

These practical suggestions are addressed to any individual or organisation active in the health field, including health policymakers, health professionals, organisations supporting or developing health projects, as well as to any other actor in the health field willing to integrate disability into their work.

Key areas of activity that can be taken up to overcome these challenges are as follows:

❖ Promotion of research and prevention, early detection and early attention. These actions can lessen, or even remove or even prevent the effects of a disability. To promote this, it is essential to foster and apply research in these areas.

❖ Implementation of universal accessibility in health environments, processes, and procedures.

For example :
- Providing persons with disabilities with all necessary information in appropriate formats.
- Full accessibility of all services including emergency services.
- Provision of services at reasonable costs (for the specific rwandan context, expand PWDs needs accommodated through Mutuelle de Sante).
- Promotion of community-based provision of information, advice and training.
- Elimination of communication barriers that currently exist in hospitals and health care services to ensure that disabled patients can communicate in other ways, e.g. sign language or other.
- Simplification of paperwork and ensuring accessibility of administrative procedures for gaining access to health care services.

❖ Training of professionals (paramedical and medical staff, social assistants, staff at vocational training centres, etc.) on specific health care and assistance needs of persons with disabilities :
- Promote and develop training courses so that staff is aware of the needs of people
- With disabilities and their typologies in order to be able to provide a good service. Disability should be integrated into professional health care studies (both during initial as well as long-life training).
- Promote incentives to foster professionals' involvement in the area.
- Promote cooperation with other stakeholders.
- Provide support to these professionals.
- Carry out these measures in cooperation with persons with disabilities.
- Special training should be provided to the staffs at employment and vocational training centres that is responsible for information, guidance, and training on the specific needs and abilities of persons with disabilities. Moreover, the direct involvement of persons with disabilities in the management and running of these centres should be considered.

❖ Creation of specialised services for persons with disabilities whenever necessary.

❖ Consultation and involvement of users, their families and the organisations representing them in the design, management and assessment of these services.

❖ Setting up of systems to facilitate the financing of special medical treatments.

❖ Promotion of the availability and accessibility of technical aids and assistive technologies. Currently, most systems only cover a limited range of technical aids and health products – in some cases, even the most essential ones are not funded – designed to increase the independence and social participation of persons with disabilities. In other cases, they are of low or medium quality and in many cases old-fashioned. In addition, persons with disabilities are not financially assisted to acquire such devices which remain beyond the reach of the common rwandan.

❖ Giving a higher visibility to persons with disabilities by employing them as staff.

Part V. Disability Mainstreaming in Justice

According to the EDPRS 2 document, "The legal and regulatory framework will be reviewed to ensure that it does not discriminate against PWDs where the Constitution already has provisions for their protection".

As other sectors of the country's life, the justice sector, which is supposed to be accessible to all, is also designed for the "average person", and thus presents significant barriers for persons with disabilities in terms of access to appropriate services since they do not fully comply with what are considered "normal standards". In the context of Africa in general and Rwanda in particular, it has been proved that special efforts need to be made to ensure that the vulnerable persons (children, poor, and women) can access the justice services.

5.1. Challenges

The following appear to be the greatest challenges to equal access in justice:

- Financial: high cost of justice services, especially when a lawyer is needed.
- Physical: physical inaccessibility of some services related to justice.
- Barriers to information: lack, or inaccessibility, of information about what is available, and on justice issues in general.
- Attitudinal, communication and social barriers manifested through, for example, attitudes of justice professionals that may even be discriminatory, as well as specific hindrances for persons with hearing impairments and with intellectual disability, who cannot <u>directly</u> and <u>appropriately</u> communicate themselves when justice services are required

5.2. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges

These practical suggestions are addressed to any individual or organisation active in the justice and social fields, including justice policymakers, justice professionals, organisations supporting or developing projects related to justice, and in general community based organisations and CSOs as in the social field.

Key areas of activity that can be taken up to overcome these challenges are as follows:

- ❖ Intensive sensitization of PWDs on their rights in general and on justice related issues in particular
- ❖ Elimination / mitigation of existing communication barriers to ensure that PWDs most affected by communications challenges can communicate in other ways, e.g. sign language or other
- ❖ Simplification of paperwork and ensuring accessibility of the currently complex justice related services
- ❖ Networking with organisations and services offering justice related services to vulnerable communities in order to ensure that disability is well integrated in their programmes and that PWDs can benefit from technical and financing facilities for greater access to justice services
- ❖ Involvement of NCPD structures at all levels in monitoring of the respect of PWDs rights and empowering them to effectively interact with justice services providers
- ❖ Sensitization / training of justice policymakers and services providers on disability related issues
- ❖ Setting up of systems to facilitate the financing of special medical treatments
- ❖ Promotion of the availability and accessibility of technical aids and assistive technologies in courts.

Part VI. Disability Mainstreaming in Sports and leisure activities

Access to and active involvement in leisure activities, including arts and cultural life, sports and recreation, and tourism facilities are as important for PWDs as for persons without disabilities. Leisure activities contribute to their personal development and they are good means of getting integrated into society. However, persons with disabilities face a number of obstacles to participation in such activities. In many cases, this prevents them from enjoying leisure activities at all or they can only have access to those specifically geared to persons with disabilities. On the other hand, their participation in the leisure sector as professionals also deserves special mention due to their difficulties.

6.1. Challenges

However, despite of the importance of leisure, persons with disabilities face a wide range of barriers :
- Sometimes transport companies refuse to accept them on board.
- Some transport companies are still not accessible for persons with disabilities, so they are forced to look for more expensive transportation alternatives.
- Many hotels, hostels, restaurants, and camping areas are not accessible for persons with physical disabilities.
- Leisure time sites (both public and private) are too often not accessible.
- The information provided on leisure activities is not accessible for persons with disabilities ; so far, there is very little information about them in Braille, easy-to read versions, etc.
- The personnel working in these activities / sites are not trained to serve persons with disabilities.
- Persons with disabilities too often face stereotypes about them ; more information and awareness-raising are needed to stress the importance of leisure for persons with disabilities.

6.2. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges

There are many ways in which organisations can help to promote the participation of all citizens in leisure activities. The following ideas are addressed to individuals and organisations involved in the leisure sector at the level of decision-making, support or implementation.

- ❖ When developing or supporting leisure activities, ensure that they involve fully inclusive infrastructures, materials and processes so that both PWDs and persons without disabilities can

participate in them, whether actively (taking an active part in their development) or passively (as a spectator).

❖ Promote the development of activities where PWDs and persons without disabilities can enjoy leisure activities together.

❖ If even by taking all measures at hand, it is not possible for persons with disabilities to participate into mainstream activities, develop specific activities specifically addressed to them. Bear in mind that this should only be done as a last resort.

❖ Ensure that any documents or promotional materials used are fully accessible and provide clear indications of accessible services and facilities, preferably, accompanied by easy-to understand international symbols.

❖ Make sure that the reservation systems (websites or others) used for your leisure activity are fully accessible and usable by everyone so that disabled tourists can interact with them independently.

❖ Develop audience-building efforts such as making available subsidised tickets, large print programmes, real-time captioning and other assistive technologies that can benefit all audiences.

❖ Regardless of the additional expenditures which may be incurred in putting accessible services and facilities in place, such services and facilities should not give rise to an increase in rates for customers with disabilities.

❖ Create opportunities for networking, training and exchange of ideas among professionals working in leisure and other related services, to help them understand how to deal with problems facing persons with disabilities.

❖ Foster the active participation of persons with disabilities as professionals in the sector.
❖ Use leisure activities as a means of promoting mutual respect and understanding and Develop materials that can be used as reference, support, and assessment in the different fields of leisure time activities

❖ Avail leisure and sports facilities (gymanse, playgrounds, …)

❖ Training in sports and leisure of PwDs,…

Part VII. Disability Mainstreaming in Financial services and funding

Persons with disabilities systematically have to face barriers in accessing financial services and funding. This is because persons with disabilities and their specific needs are disregarded or are treated on an unequal basis (e.g. when they are requested to take out extra insurance in order to have access to financial services).

Such restrictions can negatively affect persons with disabilities by denying them full inclusion in society and causing them financial problems due to their disability. Mainstream financial institutions and funders may not consciously exclude persons with disabilities, but by not seeing to their inclusion, they are failing to tackle the challenge of ensuring that financially insecure persons with disabilities have full and equal access to their services.

7.1. Opportunities in Rwanda

- An expanding banking sector
- Micro lending schemes
- SACCO Umurenge (consideration of proximity with PWDs)
- Local mutual lending groups in expansion (ibimina)

7.2. Challenges

The barriers encountered by persons with disabilities are quite diverse, such as: inaccessibility of information on sources of grants and loans or the premises where the information on them can be obtained ; refusal of financial services or exorbitant rates for the insurance required by certain financial Institutions; negative attitudes, prejudices and a lack of awareness about disabilities; or simply self-exclusion due to a belief that they will not be accepted by financial institutions when requesting a service.

7.3. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges

The following recommendations are addressed to decision-makers and staff members of public and private financial institutions and funders, including banks, grantmaking foundations and trusts and other organisations awarding grants and loans, public administrations, and other stakeholders in this field.

Some ideas to ensure their full access :

❖ Offer innovative finance schemes, e.g. microcredit or mutual lending groups.

❖ Ensure that persons with disabilities are treated like their non-disabled peers when requesting a grant or a loan. For example, do not ask for additional insurances linked to their disability.

❖ Make sure that the rights and requirements of persons with disabilities are taken into account at all stages of the funding process. This is particularly important in the case of grant-making trusts and foundations and other public and private funders and deserves particular attention given the enormous contribution that these actors could make if they respect disability-related issues in their funding processes. It implies a change of approach in which persons with disabilities are recognised as funding applicants rather than beneficiaries of project outcomes. Funders should :
- Ensure that the application process is fully accessible, clear and transparent, identifying stages and time frames and sticking to them.
- Develop the application process in close consultation with persons with disabilities and organisations representing them to make sure that the selected criteria are relevant to their rights, requirements and
- aspirations.
- Ensure that the organisations and projects supported take into consideration equality and disability related issues and that with their actions they are not creating new barriers. For this purpose, applicants
- should be required to provide evidence that they have considered how equality and diversity, and disability issues in particular, have been taken into account in the project both in the application, implementation and evaluation processes. If necessary, announce at an early stage to the beneficiaries of the funds that they will have to provide this information.
- Ask applicants to include users in the application process to ensure that projects meet identified needs. If the potential users are not already part of the organisation, applicants should consider consulting or involving specific user groups or the organisations representing them, including disability groups, and where possible use up-to date research on the issue.
- Make sure that any persons involved in assessing, selecting, supporting and monitoring projects have an understanding of disability-related issues, including the relevant rules and practices in the field, or that they have access to disability experts and resources that could help them in this task. For this purpose, in the first stage provide them with the necessary human and material resources and mechanisms to improve their understanding of the issue (e.g. provision of training inside or outside the organisation, contact with disability-related organisations or experts, attendance of seminars on the issue, information about the latest developments in the field, etc.).

- Ensure the provision of specialist expertise tailored to applicant needs, either by employing or liaising with persons with disabilities, or people with an in-depth understanding of the issues facing persons with disabilities (individuals and groups).

- Mainstream equality through each project in order to ensure that persons with disabilities are not simply restricted to disability-related opportunities (e.g. by allocating responsibility for equality and diversity to policy officers within each programme team, providing support to meet additional transport costs for persons with disabilities).

- Avail applications in accessible formats (Braille, large print ,…)

- Information is available to every client

- To ensure that persons with disabilities are not inadvertently discriminated against, increase staff awareness and understanding of the rights and requirements of persons with disabilities. This can be done by :
  - Recruiting persons with disabilities as employees or volunteers ;
  - Employing advisors with knowledge of issues affecting persons with disabilities ; and
  - Training staff to ensure they understand the rights and requirements of all persons with disabilities. Staff should be fully informed and updated about disability issues and current legislation.

The following sections analyse in detail the various aspects of the funding process. Although the proposals concern persons with disabilities, they will be of direct interest to other groups:

Marketing and raising awareness about funding opportunities

❖ Make sure that information on different types of funding reaches persons with disabilities by adopting tailored marketing strategies and targeting specific applicant groups, where appropriate. Effective methods include the use of local radio and press, including articles in specialist publications, and disseminating information through community events and to local, regional and disability organisations.

❖ Ensure that accessibility requirements are taken into account in marketing and promotional strategies and materials (paper or electronic).

❖ Consider positive action to encourage the participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in funded projects (both as funding applicants and as receivers and beneficiaries of project outcomes) e.g. funding projects that actively seek to recruit and retain persons with disabilities or that encourage persons with disabilities to apply for grants.

Application and guidance materials

❖ Ensure that applications and guidance materials are accessible by providing a wide range of sources through which materials can be obtained (Braille, audio, large print, easy read, etc.) and making material available through various channels, e.g. via direct mail, websites, e-mail. When using websites, make sure that they meet accessibility requirements

❖ Be clear and simple. For example, provide a checklist of all materials required and how to access them, have separate application forms and guidance for each funding stream, and provide examples on how funding has been used before.

❖ Be flexible regarding the requirements for awarding a grant, and in particular, when making specific statements, ensure that certain groups are not accidentally or carelessly excluded. For example, if an educational trust only funds young people up to the age of 21, its criteria may exclude some people with learning difficulties who develop more slowly than the average person does and who would not be able to take advantage of a course until over the age limit.

❖ Accept applications in different formats and through different means.

❖ Include an evaluation form focusing on the ease of the application process and the contents of relevant documentation.

Project selection

❖ Ensure that applicant organisations are committed to equal opportunities and the projects selected contribute to the promotion of non-discrimination and equal opportunities and do not create new barriers. You can do so by asking applicant organisations during the application process questions that require them to prove their commitment and show how they will implement it in practice.

❖ When disability projects fail, analyse the reasons in order to strengthen guidance and application processes to give potential applicants clearer advice.

❖ Provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants. Where possible, feedback should be made available before the deadline to enable inexperienced applicants to further develop their applications.

Application support

❖ Provide regular and accessible opportunities for potential and current applicants to receive free application support on their project proposals in ways that meet their needs (by e-mail, telephone and face-to-face meetings) before and after application forms are submitted. In particular, provide additional support to applicants who are unable to complete their application form due to a disability.

❖ Provide networking opportunities and contacts for additional support directed at small voluntary and community organisations and user-led groups to enable them to link up with larger organisations and access funds aimed at strategic partnerships.

❖ Provide a range of project support mechanisms (e.g. seminars, guidance notes, visits), including support on disability issues and areas where appraisal indicates consistent weaknesses across projects.

❖ Provide a nominated officer or mentor to support successful applicants through the process, either through visits or by telephone.

Timelines

❖ If possible, operate a roll-on-roll-off application cycle, with frequent or no deadlines. This is helpful for all applicants and in particular for persons with disabilities if they need more times to complete an application. It also helps to ensure that applications are made in response to service requirements rather than for chasing funding.

❖ Where matched funding is a requirement, provide a flexible bidding timetable to enable applicants to secure the necessary funding.

Type of support

❖ Consider extra costs that persons with disabilities might have, e.g. personal assistance and private transport if public transport is not adequate or available.

❖ Provide a mix of 'core' and 'project 'funding to enable organisations to make long-term "service development" plans and retain an appropriate skill level within the organisation. If not, they will be

forced to constantly chase funding in order to maintain their work or may have to make employees redundant until the next raft of funding.

Monitoring and evaluation

❖ Develop effective monitoring of applicant organisations, types of projects and beneficiaries, in order to assess underrepresentation of applicants, and target your marketing to address this.

❖ Monitor the number of persons with disabilities accessing projects funded and break the information down into types of impairments (e.g. visual impairment, hearing impairment, etc.), including indicators on those experiencing multiple discrimination, e.g. disabled women, other minority people with disabilities such as albinos,....

❖ Monitor applicants' compliance with equality policies and strategies.

❖ Ensure outputs can be flexible to take account of target group needs. Make greater use of outcome, impact, and soft indicators to take account of disability target groups and their potential difficulties in achieving outputs over the short term. Consider the use of project determined outputs.

❖ Ensure that the results of monitoring, consultation, and research are used to change policy and practice.

❖ Undertake an interim and final programme evaluation to identify what is working well and what can be improved and if funding is being accessed by persons with disabilities. Where access audits and the development of access plans are required, consider supporting this requirement with appropriate levels of funding to enable applicants to undertake audits and prepare access plans.

❖ Ensure that people involved in the monitoring and selection have a knowledge on diversity and disability issues.

Part VIII. Disability mainstreaming in Housing

In spite of the legislative measures and practices implemented in recent years, persons with disabilities still face many barriers preventing them from having access to housing or adapting their houses to meet their needs. This situation has a direct effect on both persons with disabilities and their families. On the one hand, persons with disabilities find it difficult to live independently both because they cannot find suitable accommodation or because they are obliged to live in accommodation that effectively imprisons them at home and makes them dependent on others in their daily activities. This can also increase the impact of their impairment and even induce further disability. On the other hand, families of the disabled find it extremely difficult to find suitable housing, which can be adapted to meet the requirements of a disabled person. Improving this situation would also be directly beneficial for elderly people, an important consideration given today's ageing population.

8.1. Key barriers

• Financial barriers, in particular because of the extra costs of acquiring an adapted house or adapting inaccessible dwellings.
• Communication barriers and negative attitudes or prejudices within the community, which make it difficult for persons with disabilities to integrate into their environment.

8.2. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges

It is proven that many persons with disabilities could live independently and / or stay in their communities if their needs were taken into account in mainstream accommodation and, where necessary, special housing or special support schemes were set up. Although the priority should be given to mainstream housing, special housing may be needed in certain cases and for certain groups, such as for people with severe disabilities or with complex dependency needs.

The solutions listed below are addressed to any person or organisation involved in the design, construction or management of housing. They include architects, interior designers, housing decision-makers, public administrations, organisations developing or providing financial support for housing projects, persons with disabilities and their families.

In general, solutions should all aim to follow four main objectives in this regard :

- To respect first and foremost a disabled person's own choices – he / she should have the opportunity to try different alternatives ;
- To take into account the perspective of the family, in cases where a disabled person needs support in decision making;
- To give greater independence to persons with disabilities ; and
- To help them to stay and / or integrate into the wider community.

In line with these objectives, the following should be observed:
- Unless they decide otherwise, people with mild disabilities should be given the opportunity to acquire accessible/mainstream housing and should be provided with support whenever it is needed ;
- For those who cannot manage to live in mainstream housing, specific schemes should be promoted to allow them to maintain and develop a strong level of independence. They include small housing schemes in the community, where they receive the required support, or, for those who prefer this option, specific residential centres with close links to the community ;
- For people with severe disabilities requiring 24-hour support, special residential centres may be needed, but efforts should be made to develop strong links with surrounding communities and to promote the person's independence and empowerment ; and
- Persons with disabilities should only be placed in residential centres if they so desire or when there is no other option (e.g. persons with complex dependency needs, persons with intellectual disabilities, etc.). These institutions should provide housing and living facilities that aim to promote persons with disabilities' self determination and equal participation in the community. Institutions that do not respect these principles should be replaced by community-based services that pursue the goals mentioned above.

- ❖ Whenever possible, and particularly in the case of people with severe disabilities or with complex dependency needs, design homes that are tailor-made to meet their needs.

- ❖ Involve persons with disabilities as much as possible in the design and management of their homes.

- ❖ Develop systems that allow persons with disabilities to live independently in their own houses.

- ❖ When developing schemes aimed at helping persons with disabilities to live independently in the wider community, consider putting in place support schemes such as information services, work and training centres, social facilities and good public transport systems.

❖ When dealing with the provision of financial support, provide financial aid for adaptations and acquisition of homes for disabled homeowners and persons with disabilities living in private rented housing.

❖ Set up advice, information, and support services to help persons with disabilities to gain access to grants and loans relating to housing.

❖ Always work closely with social actors to identify the needs of persons with disabilities.

❖ Pay special attention to the situation of families with disabled children, many of whom live in inadequate and overcrowded conditions. More and larger specially designed houses should be built to satisfy their needs.

Part IX. Disability Mainstreaming into national development processes

9.1. Identified challenges

PWDs often lag behind in terms of participation in and contribution to national development processes. Rwanda has outstanding development tools and mechanisms, but their applicability models are not disability friendly.

MECHANISM / PROGRAM	IDENTIFIED GAPS	PROPOSED ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES
UMUGANDA	Low participation	Sensitisation of PWDs to be more involved in Umuganda Training of local authorities on how to accommodate various types of disability into Umuganda activities Sign language or adapted documentation to be availed for persons with hearing impairments
UBUDEHE	Limited inclusion in relevant categories	Advocacy for consideration of specific disability vulnerabilities while setting UBUDEHE categories
VUP UMURENGE	Few PWDs benefiting from the program	Sensitisation of VUP implementers on disability mainstreaming
GIRINKA	Records of PWDs excluded due to assumptions that they cannot take care of cows	Allocate cows to vulnerable PWDs and adopt complementary strategies for those with specific limitations
ELECTIONS	Limited participation for some categories of PWDs depending on elections conditions (location, facilities for persons with visual and hearing impairments,...)	Disability representatives to be involved in the organisation of elections at all levels Elections location to take into account mobility challenges, and when necessary, local governments to make provisions for easy access for identified PWDs Conduct sensitization campaigns targeting the less represented groups
JADF	Few development partners with a	Training of all JADF staff and members on DET

	wide understanding of disability, therefore they don't include disability related issues in their interventions	(Disability Equality Trainings) - by NCPD Support to various development partners in each district on disability inclusive action plans Development and dissemination of tools on disability mainstreaming best practices to be disseminated through annual JADF forums

9.2. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges in a cross-cutting manner

- Inclusion of disability in all planning processes and outcomes
- Setting specific targets related to disability and corresponding budget lines in performance contracts (imihigo) in all sectors (for districts for example, avoid considering disability issues under "vulnerable persons")
- Empowering the existing structures of PWDs
- Encourage and support PWDs to effectively adhere to cooperatives (by founding their own cooperatives and/or joining the existing cooperatives). In case PWDs join existing cooperatives, efforts and capacity building are needed to accommodate their special needs, if any (accessibility, tailored tools/equipments, communication with persons with hearing impairments or with moderate intellectual disabilities,...)
- Putting in place mechanisms to recognize outstanding PWDs and best practices in the disability field
- Awaireness raising of PwDs to Umuganda and other publics programs,….

Part X. Horizontal issues

This section gathers some tips and recommendations on transversal issues that can be applied to any of the already mentioned areas, or they can be used in other fields of daily life. It is addressed to any institution willing to include a disability dimension in its work.

10.1. Access and accessibility

Accessibility is not just about ramps, automatic doors and other physical features, but refers to any features that make an environment accessible. In addition, it not only benefits persons with disabilities ; it also makes participation easier and more effective for other users who are excluded, including young and old alike, people who speak different languages, etc. Despite this thinking, there is a current lack of awareness and information on the need for accessibility among stakeholders, and the lack of appropriate technical knowledge.

For example, large print and audio tapes benefit not only people with visual impairments but people for whom English is not their first language. Likewise, accessible environments are convenient for elderly people and parents with little children. Therefore, it is important that you ensure from the beginning that there are no physical, attitudinal, or other barriers preventing persons with disabilities from having access to your organisation and the initiatives it carries and / or supports. This has proven to be most effective and avoids costly changes to initiatives, programmes, and venues. In addition, the Design-for-All methodology gives a new approach, overcoming accessibility policies. It shifts the focus of disability from the person to the environment in which this person lives and works.

Design-for-All is a methodology dealing with the process of decision-making within an organisation and not just at the level of the specific operative department that has the responsibility for ensuring accessibility.

Design-for-All aims to achieve the recognition of the Enabling Interface that a person uses to function within life. This enabling interface calls for an enabling environment, enabling society and enabling processes. Design for- All breaks the process of such decision making into :
- Awareness
- Consultation
- Impact assessment

The traditional view of "disability" is the medically defined loss of a bodily function. The Design-for-All methodology defines "disability" as the disablement that such a person encounters in his / her workplace due to the fact that the interface that he / she uses is not enabled by the environment in which the person is operating. herefore, this methodology focuses on the interfaces and what environmental factors will enable the person with disabilities to function in society.

10.2. E-Accessibility

Access to information has become an essential need in today's knowledge society. Overcoming the technical barriers and difficulties that persons with disabilities and others experience when trying to participate on equal terms in the Information Society (IS) is known as "e-Accessibility."
This is part of the broader e-Inclusion concept, which also addresses other types of barriers, such as financial, geographical, or educational.
Accessible websites and accessible adapted ICT equipment are essential to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

10.3. Some practical ideas to overcome these challenges:

10.3.1. Built environment

❖ For the purpose of this publication, the built environment covers all internal and external buildings and spaces, and the means of getting to and from these environments, both in urban and rural contexts, where people participate in everyday activities such as going to shops, offices, sports facilities, parks or walking on the streets. The key is to try to develop inclusive environments that can be used equally by everybody.

❖ Ensure that the environment takes into account the needs and requirements of persons with disabilities and is free from barriers.

❖ For new buildings or spaces
   o If you are involved in the construction of a new built environment, take into consideration at the earliest possible stage the access requirements of most citizens by implementing the so-called
   o "Inclusive Design" approach, which goes beyond the minimum technical and accessibility requirements. This principle should be applied to the design, building, and operation of the building or site in question. Any item inside the space should also be taken into consideration.

o If you are supporting the construction, ensure that accessibility criteria, and if possible the "Inclusive Design" principle, are taken into account and fully implemented.

❖ For existing environments, try to adapt them to make them as accessible as possible by applying the "Design for All" methodology. Most existing workplaces can be made accessible with minimum effort and expense.

❖ Inclusive environments should :

• Be *easy to use* by as many persons as possible without undue effort (for example, climbing steps when another solution would be possible), special treatment or separation ;
• *Offer* people the *possibility to choose* how they access and use them (independently or with support and assistance) and allow them to participate in any mainstream activity that takes place in them. For this purpose it is important that design, the activities taking place at these environments, and / or staff attitudes do not prevent people from doing all this ;
• Be designed *to be safe and to inspire a sense of safety*. For example, reflective surfaces can be disabling for people with visual impairments or learning disabilities as can steps for wheelchair users ; and
• *Be logical and predictable*. Elements such as the internal layout, the use of colour and lighting can help users to obtain information about the building and how to use it. For example, a reception area with seats arranged around or in clearly defined groups is a space that a person with a visual impairment will quickly recognise.

10.3.2. Information and communication materials

In today's society only a very small portion of information available, even the most essential, is accessible to all citizens. So as not to fall into this trap, consider the following :

❖ Make your information, promotional material, and other materials produced by and for the organisation available in a wide range of accessible formats, including text-only format, Braille, audio, large print (font size 16-22), easy-to-read format, CD-ROM, hard copy.

❖ Provide the information through different means such as subtitled video, printed materials and an accessible website.

❖ Accept applications, information requests and other documents in different formats ;

❖ Seek advice and feedback from disabled users and their representative organisations to ensure compatibility with current communication / assistive technology.

❖ Include evaluation forms focusing on the ease of the application process and the contents of relevant documentation.

❖ t is also important to provide accessible and affordable equipment to workers / members of organisations, adapted to their capacities and needs.

❖ Access to adapted equipment is as important as adapted software. For this, social prices for ICT-adapted equipment should be established in order to guarantee accessibility.

Website

❖ Make sure that your website complies with accessibility and usability criteria. Some features commonly used in websites cause problems for persons with disabilities. Some alternatives are available to resolve these barriers. For example :
  • Always provide a text-only format as an alternative for people using screen readers, which "read" text and then convert it to speech output for people with visual impairments.
  • Pay attention to the use of colour contrasts so that people with colour blindness can easily use the site.
  • Avoid the use of small areas for links which make it difficult for people with restricted manual dexterity to navigate.
  • Provide mouse-free navigation.

❖ Therefore, ensure that your organisation's or enterprise's website is accessible, taking into consideration the Guidelines included in the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), which can be downloaded at www.w3.org / WAI / .

Printed material

❖ Make printed material legible and accessible for people with visual impairments by considering issues such as print size, weight, font, contrast, case, colour, etc. This implies no extra cost and also makes documents more readable for other citizens.

❖ Font : Use large and clear fonts. Visually impaired readers may find it easier to read "sans serif" fonts, such as Arial. In general terms, do not use elaborated and closely spaced fonts.

❖ Size : Whenever possible, use font size 12 as a minimum standard and font size 14-16 (large print) when producing documents for visually impaired readers. Do not use more than 18-20 points.

❖ Capitals : Avoid using capital letters for blocks of text, e.g. more than one or two words They are too similar in size and shape for readers to be able to easily distinguish letters.

❖ Italics : Avoid italics, they are harder to read.

❖ Colour and paper : Be careful before choosing colours so that there is a significant contrast between them.

❖ Graphics and images : The use of graphics and images can facilitate reading for people with intellectual disabilities. However, ensure that these images can be read by the programmes used by people with visual impairments. In this sense, consider including an explanation next to the image.

❖ Whenever possible, develop easy-to read documents so that people with an intellectual disability can have access to the information.

❖ Avoid splitting up words at the end of a line.

❖ Lighten your pages (about 150 words per page A4).

❖ Whenever possible, before publishing the information, test it with your audience.

Images

❖ Images can facilitate reading for people with intellectual disabilities. However, some screen readers used by people with visual impairments cannot read graphic information. Therefore, a text description should be included next to the picture.

Oral communication (in formal conversations, speeches, etc)
❖ Keep language simple by avoiding jargon and using simple words ; explain complex terms whenever it is necessary to use them.

❖ Do not speak at a high speed and make short breaks.

❖ Facilitate sign language interpretation when possible.

❖ When talking to persons with hearing difficulties, remove pencils, gum, and cigarettes from your mouth ; if you have a beard or a moustache, consider the fact that they can interfere with their ability to speech-read you ; make eye-to eye contact and use facial expressions and body language to communicate the emotion of a message.

❖ Ensure that only one person speaks at a time.

❖ Let the person with disabilities choose the best seating or standing arrangement to see the speaker and the interpreter, if there is one.

❖ Point to the person you are talking about, if you are talking to a person with hearing difficulties.

❖ Do not pace while giving a presentation and do not speak while you are writing on a blackboard, as that will make difficult to read your lips for those with hearing problems.

❖ Incorporate visual aids, demonstrations, flip charts, written agendas and handouts into your presentations and make sure that minutes or notes are taken to ensure that your audience gets all the information.

❖ When dealing in particular with people with intellectual disabilities, take into account some addition requirements : explain one idea per sentence, use the same term for the same concept ; do not give too much information on one sheet of paper or in too short a period of time.

❖ Remember that persons with disabilities, even if they have specific requirements, are adults and not children, therefore treat them like adults when you speak with them.

10.3.3. Meetings and events

❖ Regarding the physical environment, check the section "built environment".

❖ Regarding speech, check the section "oral communication".

❖ Regarding reference and support documents, provide at least those which are crucial for understanding and following an event in different formats upon request or send them in advance

so that persons with disabilities attending the meeting can adapt them to their needs. If there are people with learning disabilities in your audience, consider using easy-to read documents.

❖ Allow for a range of communication formats so that everyone has an opportunity to communicate in some way.

❖ Visual aids such as Power Point, slides or flip charts facilitate understanding. However, when you use such material, make sure that whatever is written is easy to understand. Use pictures whenever appropriate, use concrete symbols (photos, images, drawings, etc), and read the text and explain the pictures included so that persons with visual impairments can follow it.

❖ Involve your audience in your presentation To this end, speak directly and personally to the audience ; create some interaction with them ; use examples to make your presentation more understandable ; leave time for questions and discussion.

❖ Whenever it is possible, use the system of accessibility cards (each one with a different shape) to make sure that everyone understands what the speaker is saying :
  • Green card : participants agree with what the speaker says.
  • Yellow card : the speaker is speaking too quickly and is requested to slow down.
  • Red card : participants do not understand what the speaker is saying ; He / she is requested to explain it with easier words.

10.3.4. Lack of awareness, prejudices, and attitudinal barriers

A lack of awareness, prejudices, and negative attitudes in most cases give rise to other types of barriers. This is why it is important to tackle the root causes of existing and potential problems. The following can be taken into account :

❖ Develop or support formal and informal information and awareness-raising initiatives both inside and outside your organisation, possibly with partners, at all levels and in all areas of activity.

❖ Take advantage of all opportunities to raise awareness among staff members, colleagues, and partners about the importance and benefits of diversity. Use positive images showing persons with disabilities in active roles in your publications (newsletters, brochures on good practice, reports / studies, web page) and in interviews, documentaries, editorials, opinion pieces, etc. Always include news items on equal opportunities in your various publications and websites.

❖ Communicate and promote in your advertising and marketing material your commitment to equality and diversity among your staff (including volunteers), partners, customers, as well as other stakeholders.

❖ Organise training sessions whenever it is necessary.

10.3.5. Sharing your values

• Promote your approach among your partner organisations and encourage them to follow your approach.
• Ensure that other companies with which you work, in particular goods and services suppliers, are aware that this policy is in place and that they also respect disability issues.
• In the case of grant-making organisations, include a horizontal clause in your grant-making procedure that obliges beneficiaries to comply with the different disability-related aspects, irrespective of the area of work / thematic priority.
• Whether you are offering grants to new businesses, dealing with lifelong learning, rehabilitation, assisting ex-offenders or ethnic minorities, disability mainstreaming applies to you. This is because your stakeholders and participants are not a homogeneous group and any of these activities can also include a disability approach.
• Ask specifically how equality and diversity issues in general and disability issues in particular will be taken into account in projects. This should include the provision of a project-specific equality strategy, evidence of consultation with user groups, and an access policy and audit where applicable.

10.3.6. Consultation and involvement of persons with disabilities and organisations representing them

• Consult and involvement of all stakeholders, and in particular persons with disabilities and the organisations representing them, in all activities and at all levels, is a key factor in success.
• Consult and ask for advice and feedback and cooperate with all actors in the field.
• Consult with and encourage active participation by organisations representing persons with disabilities as well as persons with disabilities themselves. This would require a proactive policy, which would imply examining consultation mechanisms to ensure that persons with disabilities can participate and implementing non discriminatory practices and affirmative action, e.g. extra funding to support extra costs whenever they exist.

CONCLUSION

Is it possible for any organisation to take into consideration and integrate persons with disabilities and disability issues into their structures and activities? The answer is YES. And by doing so, they can enormously contribute to the full integration of people of disability without changing their objectives or areas of work.

Finally, we should not forget that an approach based on the mainstreaming of disability should not exclude disability-specific actions, which are also necessary and for certain persons with disabilities, essential. In this context, we consider this publication to be an additional contribution in this process. We hope that it serves to raise awareness on the issue and to encourage reflection on how to improve the integration of persons with disabilities and disability issues in society as a whole. We hope that the guidelines and examples will give ideas to organisations that have not tried this approach yet and will help organisations already applying it to better understand what they are doing and encourage them to share this with other organisations.

The key is to try to look at each of the different elements of the organisation (working environment, training policy, activities, labour relations, etc.) and the activities carried out and / or supported from the disability standpoint, and from the outset whenever possible. Check if all elements recognise, respect, and meet the needs of persons with disabilities – whether employees, customers or users – and if they provide the same opportunities to all citizens. It is also essential to consult and involve persons with disabilities and the organisations representing them at all stages. They are the real experts in this field and the ones that can provide you the best support to get involved in this area. And do not forget, the challenge is to remember to be inclusive !

The NCPD remains available for any government institution, private sector firm, CSO as well as international organisation for customized support on disability mainstreaming.