

ICED Evidence Library

Developing the case for disability inclusion

Tags: Inclusion, Disability, Infrastructure, Economic, Private sector

Improving the lives of people with disabilities has increasingly become a major priority for government, civil society and the private sector globally. While the development challenge continues to gain traction and articulated globally, the economic case is also become clear. Below we provide some helpful arguments for building the social and economic case to focus on disability inclusive policies and programmes.

The development challenge:

As a demographic, people with disabilities have often been ignored, particularly in a developing country context. However, the development challenge has clearly been made demonstrated by their explicit inclusion within the Sustainable Development Goals. If people with disabilities continue to be ignored, the SDGs will fail to 'leave no one behind'.



Credit: World Bank Creative Commons TS38-19 World Bank

- Globally, more than 1 billion people or 15% of people lives with a disability¹.
- 80% of people with disabilities live in developing countries².
- In developing countries, up to 18% of people (adults) live with a disability³.
- People with disabilities are amongst the poorest, most marginalised and socially excluded groups in society⁴.
- Disability also impacts poverty at the household level with many families that include someone with a disability becoming poorer⁵
- Signs that as developing countries become richer the poverty gap widens between people with and without disabilities - "The development process is not inclusive by default"⁶.

Developing the 'business case':

As policy makers and programme implementers we are often asked to put forward a convincing 'business case' to compete for often scarce or limited resources to specific groups or demographics. This economic and 'business' case for focussing on people with disabilities has a growing evidence based which is increasing the interest shown from a more diverse set of actors including investors and the private sector.

Disability is an evolving concept

The UN states that, "disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."
(UNCRPD, 2006).

¹ Source: http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report/en/

² Source: http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report.pdf

³ Source: http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report.pdf

⁴ Source: <http://hpod.org/pdf/Disability-poverty-and-development.pdf>

⁵ Source: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOCIALPROTECTION/Resources/SP-Discussion-papers/Disability-DP/1109.pdf>

⁶ Source: Ensuring we leave no one behind: key findings from Bridging the Gap, Mitra, S, Bridging the Gap conference, March 2018, unpublished

Below we provide a synthesis of some of the evidence behind these developments:

<p>1. It makes economic sense</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 1% increase in spending on inclusive infrastructure can increase economic output by up to 2.6% over four years⁷. • In low – middle income countries economic losses relating to exclusion of PwD in the labour force range from 3 to 7 per cent of GDP⁸ • PwC CEOs survey shows that labour skills and infrastructure are the two top defining considerations for MNC CEOs when making investment decisions - inclusion of skilled labour with disabilities can be a game changer⁹.
<p>2. The Global and National Regulatory environments are changing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >80% of countries have ratified the UNCRPD. • The SDGs include 5 specific reference to disabilities and all 17 include 'leave no one behind'. • In 2013, government of Kenya committed to 30% of all supply contracts to youth, women and people with disabilities¹⁰. • Quotas for employment of people with disabilities in place in many countries but not always enforced.
<p>3. Public opinion is changing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move towards the abilities of people with disabilities • IDB survey revealed infrastructure for people with disabilities more of a priority than for those in poverty or rural areas¹¹.
<p>4. The private sector are already seeing the potential of PwDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading MNCs such as GSK, Barclays, Accenture, Unilever, Microsoft and IBM are seeking to become more 'disability confident' and gain public recognition. • Growing mainstream market in disability technology with Microsoft and Apple investing in the market potential¹². • Procurement is being used as a route to embed disability-inclusive principles¹³.

For further information, case studies and technical guidance on how to 'build in' disability inclusion into infrastructure and cities programming please contact the ICED team or visit the ICED website www.icedfacility.org

⁷ Source: <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/53/sores093014a>

⁸ Source: http://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_149529/lang--en/index.htm

⁹ Source: <https://www.pwc.in/assets/pdfs/publications/ceo-survey/20th-ceo-survey-being-fit-for-growth.pdf>

¹⁰ Source: <http://agpo.go.ke/>

¹¹ Source: https://blogs.iadb.org/desarrolloefectivo_en/2017/03/31/filling-infrastructure-gap-americas-people-really-want/

¹² Source: <https://www.ft.com/content/ae91d600-8caf-11e7-9580-c651950d3672>

¹³ Source: <https://www.bsr.org/our-insights/blog-view/impact-sourcing-inclusive-supply-chains-microsoft-tim-hopper>

