



Using Evidence to Inform and Monitor Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction

Thematic Guidance Note

February 2021

Background

In 2020, an independent, comprehensive evaluation of disability inclusion within the DFAT-funded Disaster READY program was conducted. Based on the findings, practical guidance has been developed for disability inclusion within disaster preparedness activities.

This suite of thematic guidance includes:

- Strengthening disability inclusion in community-based disaster preparedness
- Influencing government-led disability inclusive disaster risk reduction and
- Partnerships to promote disability inclusive disaster risk reduction.

This guidance note focuses on using evidence to inform and monitor disability inclusive disaster risk reduction.

Priority Issues for Using Evidence

- People with disabilities are disproportionately disadvantaged by disasters and are more likely to be injured or die during a disaster than people without disabilities.
- The collection and use of evidence regarding disability inclusion across the humanitarian sector is still emerging. People with disabilities and their priorities are not always identified in community mapping exercises, resulting in invisibility of their requirements in community disaster response plans. Likewise, the needs of people with disabilities are rarely identified in post-disaster needs assessments, resulting in these not being met.
- Disability inclusive monitoring collects and provides feedback on the progress of disability inclusion efforts, informing decision-making to improve performance, and is an important contributor to effective disability inclusion.
- Disability identification, data collection and disaggregation can be inconsistent. Where they are in place, monitoring approaches might focus on counting the number of people with disabilities who have participated in or benefitted from the program, however qualitative reflections on achievements, lessons and how change has happened are limited.
- Where it is in place, disability inclusion monitoring efforts focus on counting people with disabilities as one group. There is little or no monitoring of participation by the type of functional difficulty experienced by people (eg seeing, hearing, walking, remembering, concentrating)¹. As such, there is little understanding of the degree to which people with diverse disabilities are participating.
- While NGO partners in some places have made some efforts to collect disability information, there is little evidence of this being used to inform work planning.
- The engagement of Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) in establishing systems for disability identification and monitoring is limited.

¹ The Washington Group Short Set are non-diagnostic, and identify disability using functional difficulty as a proxy.

- Dissemination of evidence regarding disability inclusion creates awareness of the importance of disability inclusion and the requirements of people with disabilities. Disability inclusive monitoring is important as both a process and an outcome.

Collect and disaggregate disability data

- Use the Washington Group Short Set with every program activity participant to determine disability status. Disaggregate datasets by disability, sex and functional difficulty in reporting. Reflect on the participation of women, girls, men and boys, as well as people with different functional difficulties, and in consultation with DPOs, consider the possible reasons for any differences.
- Find out the disability prevalence rate in the country in which you are working and compare this to the participation rate in your program. If it is significantly less, reflect on the reasons for this. Involve DPO representatives in this reflection.
- Collate reflections and lessons and ensure they inform planning for the next phase, as well as reporting.
- In community assessments, use questions and methodologies which locate people with disabilities and identify their requirements and priorities.² Ensure the priorities of diverse people with disabilities are identified – including men, women, girls and boys with a range of disabilities. Engaging people with disabilities as data collectors can encourage discussion about disability inclusion.
- Together with DPOs, provide training and awareness raising to staff to build their understanding of and confidence in disability data collection.

Use disability inclusive monitoring processes

- Ensure monitoring tools capture information about progress in disability inclusion. This could include prompts to observe whether people with disabilities are participating in activities or receiving distributed items after a disaster, or if activity venues are accessible, or questions about disability inclusion in focus groups. Mainstream disability inclusion questions and prompts into monitoring tools wherever possible. Enlist the support of DPOs in developing and testing monitoring tools.
- Involve people with disabilities including DPO representatives on monitoring teams, for example as data collectors, awareness raisers or community facilitators. Provide them with a full briefing and/or training regarding their role.
- Include people with disabilities and disability stakeholders such as DPOs and government disability focal points as key informants for interviews and focus group.
- Identify good practice stories and document and disseminate these to raise awareness and share lessons.
- Together with DPOs, provide training and awareness raising to program staff to build their understanding of and confidence in disability inclusive monitoring processes.

² The Washington Group Short Set is recommended for use to identify disability status and enable disaggregation by disability.

Use evidence to inform programming

- Consider lessons and reflections from data collection regarding the participation of people with disabilities and use these to inform work planning.
- Hold annual reflection meetings with Country Coordination Committee members to share and discuss lessons and reflections from disability inclusive monitoring efforts, and implications for work planning.
- Support community disaster committees to draw on evidence collected during community assessments and the voices of people with disabilities to mainstream the priorities of people with disabilities into disaster plans.

Disseminate information

- Ensure that findings and reflections are incorporated into reports.
- Use data, findings and lessons to demonstrate and promote in-country how disability inclusive disaster preparedness meets national policy commitments.
- Build disability inclusive perspectives into videos or other mainstream communication efforts.
- Develop case studies and use strategic communications to disseminate.
- Assume that mass communication strategies, including early warning systems, will not reach everyone. Meet the communication needs of particular groups, for example use sign language interpreters to convey information to deaf people, captions on television advertisements, and provide verbal information for people with low vision.
- Use communications as an opportunity to promote positive attitudes towards disability. Depict people with disabilities as participants in their households and communities, and use positive, non-discriminatory language.

Further information

- Plan (2015) Collecting and using data on disability to inform inclusive development:
https://www.addc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Plan-CBM-Nossal_Disability-Data-Collection-Practice-Note_2016Update.pdf
- Washington Group on Disability Statistics. Washington Group Short Set on Functioning:
<https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/question-sets/wg-short-set-on-functioning-wg-ss/>

Cover image: ADRA Australia