

## PROMOTING DISABILITY INCLUSION IN USAID MISSIONS

### Overview

As the US has signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and USAID has developed specific policies and directives related to disability, USAID Missions are encouraged to take a proactive position in ensuring Mission staff are informed and people with disabilities are accessing programs and opportunities offered through USAID.

The objective of this document is to provide USAID Missions with the information and tools needed to understand inclusive development and take concrete steps in making USAID Missions more inclusive. In addition to the resource documents attached, there are two steps each Mission can take toward more inclusive programming: appoint a disability focal point and develop/utilize a disability inclusion action plan.

### Step 1: Appoint a “Disability Focal Point” within the USAID Mission

Each USAID Mission should appoint one person on its staff to serve as the Disability Focal Point. This person should be a member of the Mission senior staff, such as someone from the program office, who has a broad understanding of the various programs and operations within the Mission. Ideally, that individual would also have an interest and/or previous experience working with disability issues and inclusive development. In many cases, it is beneficial to appoint a Locally Employed Staff (LES) or Foreign Service National (FSN) to help ensure continuity and institutional knowledge. Responsibilities could include:

- Liaise with USAID’s Disability Team in Washington (existing programs, updates, opportunities);
- Serve as point of contact for disability groups and NGOs and answer questions related to disability;
- Lead the process in developing the Disability Inclusion Action Plan with relevant stakeholders;
- Compile information required for USAID’s Performance Report on Disability;
- Function as the in-house resource person for all disability-related matters.

### Step 2: Develop/Utilize a Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Each Mission should develop/utilize a Disability Inclusion Action Plan. This should provide the Mission with clear actions and timelines to reduce barriers and proactively ensure the full inclusion of people with disabilities into all USAID programs and operations. Some key areas could include (but are not limited to):

- Increase knowledge and capacity of staff and partners on inclusive development;
- Perform an access review of conditions relating to programmatic and environmental accessibility;
- Modify conditions (programmatic/environmental) to increase accessibility;
- Maintain visibility of commitment to inclusive development;
- Review and amend human resource procedures;
- Facilitate relationships with Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs).

USAID’s e-learning course, “Inclusive Development”, provides a sample Disability Inclusion Plan for Ecuador. Though some elements are very good, it lacks a specific timeframe and thus makes it difficult to measure the success of the plan. Ideally, Disability Inclusion Action Plans should be one-year, reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

<b>Attachments:</b>
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1. Background on USAID and Inclusive Development
2. USAID’s Disability Policy
3. AAPD 04-17 (Guidance on Contracts and Grants language)
4. AAPD 05-07 (Accessibility)
5. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
6. Disability Assessment Tool (country, stakeholders, USAID policies)
7. MIUSA Checklist for Inclusion
8. **Recommended Disability Inclusion Plan table**