



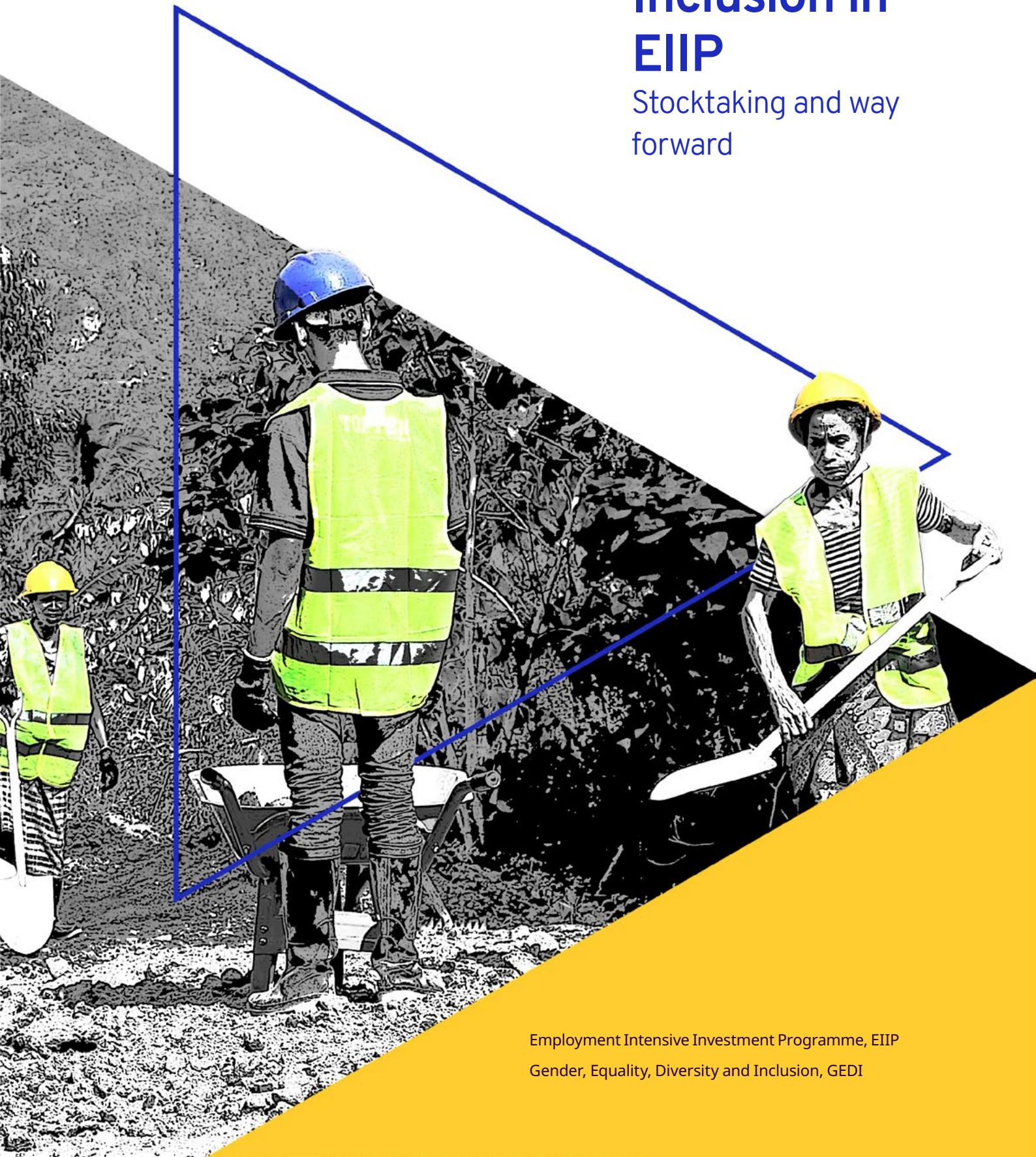
International
Labour
Organization

EIIP

Employment Intensive Investment Programme

► Disability Inclusion in EIIP

Stocktaking and way
forward



Employment Intensive Investment Programme, EIIP
Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, GEDI

▶ **Disability Inclusion in EIIP**

Stocktaking and way forward

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Disability Inclusion in EIIP Stocktaking and way forward

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Foreword

Persons with disabilities are estimated to make up over one billion, or 15 per cent, of the world's population. About 80 per cent of them are of working age. The right of persons with disabilities to decent work, however, is frequently denied. Persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities,¹ face attitudinal, physical and informational barriers to equal opportunities in the world of work. Compared to persons without disabilities, they experience higher rates of unemployment and economic inactivity and are at greater risk of insufficient social protection, which is a major reason of extreme poverty. Guaranteeing that persons with disabilities have income security, that their disability-related needs and extra costs are met and that they have effective access to health care services is crucial to significantly promoting the participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market and in society at large.² This is in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,³ which views persons with disabilities as subjects with rights who are capable of claiming those rights, are able to make decisions for their lives on the basis of their free and informed consent and are actively involved members of society.

The ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) contributes to the reduction of poverty through employment generation, local participation in planning with the utilization of locally available skills and resources, capacity building and the promotion of good governance policies. The EIIP integrates rights at work and gender equality as guiding principles of its gender and inclusion strategy. Over the project cycle, it promotes the engagement of women and disadvantaged groups (persons with disabilities, indigenous and tribal peoples, and other socially marginalized groups) and seeks to influence policies at the institutional level that would benefit from the investments and the employment offered. However, evidence is needed that would result in influencing policy and providing effective technical assistance. In this specific case, it is necessary to show how persons with disabilities access job opportunities within EIIP programmes and projects – as workers, supervisors, professionals and contractors. Moreover, from the inception of the project design phase, an indication is required that demonstrates to what extent the specific needs of persons with disabilities are recognized and/or included to enjoy the assets created through public investments in a given infrastructure development project.

The present report assesses and provides recommendations on disability inclusion for the ILO's EIIP. Disability inclusion addresses the key goals of employment intensive investments: engaging a labour force that is out of work and providing infrastructure that supports employment opportunities through development. As such, it relates to the workers and other beneficiaries engaged in these initiatives, the accessibility of assets developed, capacity built in communities and interventions in institutions and policy.

1 See https://www.ilo.org/lima/publicaciones/WCMS_760023/lang--es/index.htm.

2 United Nations, General Assembly (2015), Rights of persons with disabilities. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities. A/70/297. Available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/248/40/PDF/N1524840.pdf?OpenElement>.

3 United Nations, General Assembly (2006), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted on 13 December 2006. A/RES/61/106. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>.

This study was jointly commissioned by the Job Creation through Public Investment unit of the Development and Investment (DEVINVEST) branch and the disability team in the Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) branch to support EIIP staff and practitioners during the process of disability inclusion. The study was conducted through desk review and interviews, focusing particularly on four country cases that provided a diverse scope and nature of employment-intensive infrastructure works: Jordan, Philippines, Tanzania and Timor-Leste.

Based on the findings on disability inclusion in EIIP's projects and programmes in the four country cases, the study examines important challenges and good practices along the project cycle, calling attention to intersectional challenges approaches that safeguard the inclusion of persons with disabilities as workers. Additional research is needed to assess the quality of the inclusion of persons with disabilities, the mobilization and identification of persons with disabilities and the "appropriateness" of jobs. In addition, safety issues and how the work is conducted on site must be further explored. Among other things, the recommendations of this study address programmatic actions at headquarters for joint collaboration with GEDI, for mainstreaming disability as a theme through research and technical products and for establishing joint EIIP-GEDI pilot initiatives to tackle inclusion on a range of levels. Recommendations also address the inclusion of disability throughout the project cycle, dealing with technical issues that present challenges to projects, as well as confronting stereotypes concerning the work capacity of persons with disabilities. In addition, partnerships are recommended with organizations working on disability and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities who may need capacity development on the technical side of employment-intensive investment.

Mito Tsukamoto

Chief DEVINVEST

► Acknowledgments

The report has been prepared by Peter Torres Fremlin under the overall supervision of Ms. Maria Teresa Gutierrez, EIIP and Mr. Esteban Tromel, GEDI.

The work has benefitted from contributions from diverse specialists from Headquarters, Regional EIIP Specialists, country based project staff, partners and disability organizations in Jordan, Philippines, Tanzania and Timor-Leste as listed in the Annex.

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Photo 1. Greater Ajloun municipality. Group of workers cleaning along the roads, ILO Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme, Phase 5, 2021.

► Executive Summary

This study is a stocktaking that assesses and provides recommendations on disability inclusion for the ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP). Conducted through desk review and interviews, it focuses particularly on work performed in Jordan, Philippines, Tanzania and Timor-Leste.

Disability inclusion addresses the key goals of employment intensive investments: engaging a labour force that is out of work and providing infrastructure that supports development. As such, it relates to the workers and other beneficiaries engaged in these initiatives, the accessibility of assets developed, capacity built in communities and interventions in institutions and policy.

Employment intensive investments have included persons with disabilities as a target group in a wide variety of contexts. In this regard, ILO projects are dating back to at least the 1990s in Cambodia, where measures were taken to include amputees in works programmes. International references for employment intensive investments show that works programmes, for example in South Africa and India, have hiring targets for inclusion of persons with disabilities. Research on the Indian programme provides an important reference for challenges and opportunities that a big program faces in inclusion of persons with disabilities.

ILO projects have intervened in this area through a variety of measures that provide a useful base for inclusion in further work. The most substantial intervention concerns the attention to inclusion of persons with disabilities in their roles as workers, and this is often approached through a specific hiring or employment target. Other areas of disability inclusion are comparatively less developed: accessible infrastructure and partnerships with disability organizations are more sporadic.

There is limited information on the quality of inclusion of disabled workers. However, what is available shows that the quality is mixed and uneven. There are positive cases of people's lives being transformed but also cases that give reason for concern where inclusion has remained very superficial.

Further analysis of current inclusion looks at how it takes place through the project cycle and explores issues of attitude change, capacity development, partnerships and procurement and monitoring processes. It explores opportunities and challenges of fitting disability inclusion into a wider inclusion approach and reviews the technical issues that present challenges to projects: mobilizing disabled people, finding "appropriate" jobs and addressing more substantially the question of accessible infrastructure.

This review provides recommendations on upgrading the programmatic attention to disability inclusion through mainstreaming the principle in technical advice, conducting pilot interventions to integrate its inclusion in selected projects and develop respective guidelines, as well as ascertaining opportunities for advice on disability and decent work to incorporate these issues. Recommendations are also provided on mainstreaming disability inclusion across areas of project delivery, and some specific directions for the focus countries of this study are given.

► Acronyms

ASDW	A Single Drop for Safe Water
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Philippines
DEVINVEST	Development and Investment branch, ILO
EIIP	Employment-Intensive Investment Programme
EPWP	South Africa's Expanded Public Works Programme
ERA	Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry Project, ILO
GEDI	Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion branch, ILO
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISPA	Inter Agency Social Protection Assessments
MGNREGA	India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PARDEV	Partnering for Development, ILO
RHTO	Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan, Timor-Leste
TZCLD	Territoires Zéro Chômeur de Longue Durée
VUP	Vision 2020 Umurenge Program
WAPES	World Association of Public Employment Services
WHO	World Health Organization

► About this study

This study was jointly commissioned by the Job Creation through Public Investment unit of DEVINVEST and the disability team in the GEDI branch. It was managed by María Teresa Gutiérrez and Stefan Tromel.

The review was conducted by Peter Torres Fremlin, an external consultant. In Philippines, Abner Manlapaz, an independent consultant, conducted interviews with persons with disabilities. In Jordan, Mohammad Sirhan, administrative and finance assistant of an ILO project with EIIP input, facilitated a meeting with a disability organization.

A presentation to headquarters and field colleagues shared an initial version of this report. Thanks go to colleagues for feedback, and particular for written feedback to Abner Manlapaz, Asfaw Kidanu, Mohammad Sirhan, Jennylyn Aguinaldo, and Honorio Palarca.

The study conducted research through desk review and semi-structured interviews with ILO colleagues and selected stakeholders. Interviews were conducted with colleagues at headquarters and with EIIP regional specialists in the respective countries. Four countries with specific projects were chosen by EIIP for focused research: Jordan, Philippines, Tanzania and Timor-Leste.

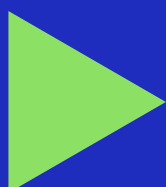
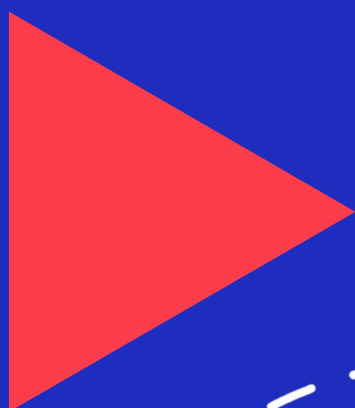
In Jordan, the Employment through Labour Intensive Infrastructure project targets both Syrian refugees and host communities. Interviews were held with project team members, engineers and an organization representing persons with disabilities. In a follow-up meeting with colleagues from Jordan and Lebanon an emerging strategy on inclusion was discussed.

In Philippines, the Improvement of Water Supply Equipment Management Capacity for the Establishment of Peace in Mindanao project. Interviews were conducted with members of the project team, the implementing partner and persons with disabilities in the region. In addition, two ILO colleagues who had worked in crisis response projects were interviewed.

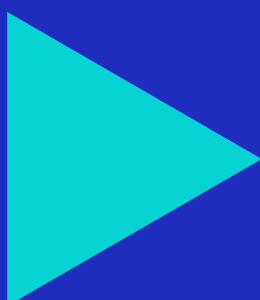
In Tanzania, the ILO technical assistance to the Productive Social Safety Net Programme. Project colleagues and government counterparts were interviewed.

In Timor-Leste, two projects: Roads for Development Support Programme (R4D-SP) and Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry (ERA). Interviews were held with colleagues from both projects and a national-level disability organization.

A list of persons interviewed is provided as an annex.



▶ 1



► Context

Understanding disability and work

To understand how disability fits into employment intensive investments, we first need to establish the context on the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in work.

Persons with disabilities make up 15 per cent of the world's population and are a very diverse group.⁴ They are less likely to be in work than persons without disabilities: analysis from eight regions around the world shows that 36 per cent of persons with disabilities are in employment, compared to 60 per cent for persons without disabilities. Among persons with disabilities, women with disabilities are less likely to be in employment than men with disabilities, and persons with severe or multiple impairments are also less likely to be in work.⁵

The right to work and the actions to be taken by countries to ensure work for persons with disabilities have been enshrined in international rights frameworks and development agendas. They focus on removing barriers that persons with disabilities face in attaining work and on taking action to achieve wider employment.

International Frameworks



- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with over 180 ratifications, enshrines the right for persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others. Countries must take action to prevent discrimination and promote the realization of the right to work.
- The Sustainable Development Goals, in Target 8.5, aim to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for persons with disabilities, among other groups.
- ILO Conventions protect persons with disabilities in the same way they protect other workers. Particularly relevant is Convention 159, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons), and accompanying Recommendation 168.

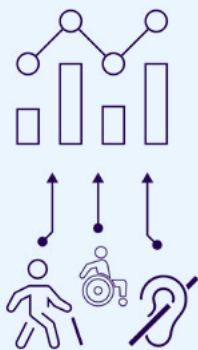
⁴ World Health Organization (WHO) and World Bank, *World Report on Disability* (2021).

⁵ United Nations, *Disability and Development Report 2018: Realizing the Sustainable Development Goal by, for and with Persons with Disabilities* (2019).

In order to realize these rights and goals, international organizations are taking action to become more responsive to disability. The United Nations has adopted a system-wide Disability Inclusion Strategy to raise standards and performance on disability in all its areas of work. The ILO [Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy 2020–23](#) similarly covers all areas of ILO work and aims to improve labour market outcomes for persons with disabilities.

Employment intensive investments can be integrated in, or closely related to, public employment services or social protection. In both these areas, action is being taken on disability inclusion. In public employment services, measures are increasingly taken to promote the employment of persons with disabilities. For example, around the world, nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of public employment services include persons with disabilities as a key target group.⁶ Social protection measures are being transformed to adopt rights-based approaches to disability. This includes abandoning approaches that are based on considering persons with disabilities as incapable of work. Persons with disabilities should have access to mainstream measures for social protection, and this includes public works programmes.⁷

About Disability Data



- Gathering data on disability is complex, but standardized tools exist to navigate these challenges. The questions included in the [Short Set on Functioning](#) by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics are the international standard for identifying disability through a census and are so robust as to be used in different environments. The important point to note is that the questions do not use the word “disability”, given the wide and differing concepts of what that means for different people.
- With the Washington Group, the ILO has developed a module to use in [Labour Force Surveys](#) to identify persons with disabilities as well as the barriers and attitudes that enable or limit participation in work. Further explanations of both tools are available on the [Washington Group website](#).

⁶ Based on a survey of 71 countries. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES) and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *The World of Public Employment Services: Challenges, Capacity and Outlook for Public Employment Services in the New World of Work* (2015).

⁷ See further the joint statement facilitated by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and the ILO: [Joint Statement: Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Supporting the Full and Effective Participation of Persons with Disabilities](#) (2019).

► **Disability in Employment Intensive Investments**

Employment intensive investments have progressively developed their ability to respond to diverse social conditions and groups among their target populations in terms of the employment generated, skills and capacities developed and the use of infrastructure created.

The exclusion of persons with disabilities from labour market opportunities make them a key group in these investments. As the findings below show, this is already recognized in many programmes where there is a target for inclusion of persons with disabilities as workers. It is important however, to consider inclusion in a broad sense, in each of the areas of programme intervention.

As such, this review understands disability inclusion in employment intensive investments to be inclusion in these areas:

- As workers, on an equal basis with others. Further inclusion in employment generated or employment in supply chains.
- In activities dedicated to promoting employability, such as skills development or other interventions.
- As implementers, whether through persons with disabilities working in implementing partners, contractors or partnerships with organizations they lead.
- Accessibility of infrastructure and other investments made. A universal design approach ensures that infrastructure can be better used by all.
- Capacity development of project partners, stakeholders and contractors raise capacity to respond to this population.

Policy interventions to remove barriers and promote inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Inclusion of persons with disabilities as ILO personnel in the implementation of these programmes is part of the ILO Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy but is beyond the scope of this review.



Photo 2. Timor Leste, Baucau municipality, Group of workers working on unloading materials for on Defawasi Junction 1 – Uacala road Section 04, Ch. 6+750 Drift Section. ILO ERA Agroforestry Project.

“How will people with disabilities do this work?”



One of the first issues that colleagues and stakeholders raise is of how persons with disabilities will perform the work in employment intensive investment programmes. These often take place in challenging contexts of heavy physical work and are sometimes carried out in remote rural areas. Some public works programmes are explicitly designed for so-called “able-bodied” members of households to be engaged in the public works activities. Cash transfers might be provided for those that “cannot” work.



Persons with disabilities are a diverse population, however. For any given occupation or work, there are many persons with disabilities who can perform it. The idea that they cannot do it is often based on stereotypes and narrow ideas about the persons that fall into a given group.



Furthermore, with accessibility and inclusion measures, more persons with disabilities will be able to perform the required tasks. This might be achieved through making job sites more accessible, provision of transportation, adaptations to roles and/or adjustments on an individual basis. Persons with disabilities highlight that one of the key barriers that keeps them from accessing their potential work is the attitude of stakeholders and communities.



Beyond making environments accessible and inclusive, a broader scope of roles and responsibilities will ensure that a wider range of people can meaningfully benefit from employment intensive investment programmes.



After these measures are taken, there will still be persons with disabilities – and persons without disabilities – who are not able to benefit from the work provided by these programmes. Provisions of support to this group, such as cash transfers, should be anticipated.



Inclusion of persons with disabilities in employment intensive infrastructure should be approached from a basis of capabilities and possibilities. Programmes and policies should take measures to support inclusion, rather than directly or indirectly creating new barriers to participation.

Employment intensive investments intervene across a wide range of areas. The focus and possibilities for inclusion differ depending on the type of programme. In some programmes, the main goal is infrastructure development – building a road, for example – and a labour-intensive technology choice can be made. These programmes have a duty not to discriminate, but they may be more constrained in the modalities and the extent to which they can invest in inclusive measures. Other programmes, however, have the goal of employment as factor that can guide the design of work opportunities. These programmes have greater opportunity to provide a broader spectrum of diverse roles and invest in inclusion.

► **Understanding Inclusion across EIIP areas of work**

Employment Impact Assessments

Impact assessments should evaluate the employment impact on persons with disabilities. As with other groups, this should examine the impact of direct and indirect employment and inclusion through supply chains. Assessments should investigate environmental or systemic barriers to employment as well as the results for individuals. This will benefit from the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Many system-level impact assessments use data from labour force surveys or household income and expenditure surveys. These surveys are increasingly disaggregating data by disability, and where they do not, programmes should advise that they do. As noted above, the Washington Group questions should be used.

Public and Private Sector Development

Attitudes and capacity of public and private sector actors are key challenges to inclusion of persons with disabilities. Both public and private sectors need to be able to recognize on how to approach this issue on institutional level as well as be aware of the implementation of specific programmes.

The public sector will need to develop policies that direct their engagement on this issue. The private sector will particularly benefit from challenging the preconceived notion that actions on disability will result in a loss for them. As well as sensitization on disability, a “business case” for disability inclusion should be presented.

Organizations working on disability, including those representing persons with disabilities, will need more capacity to understand and support employment intensive investments to become disability inclusive. It will be important to establish partnerships between these organizations and employment intensive infrastructure initiatives.

Public Employment Programmes

Public employment programmes perhaps offer the greatest scope for inclusion. These can be designed to be responsive to the needs and situations of diverse groups and individuals and thereby include wider populations in work. There is a policy opportunity for employment guarantees that target, or are specifically dedicated to, persons with disabilities. The Inter Agency Social Protection Assessments (ISPA) tool on social protection public works programmes highlights the need for measures to target vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.⁸

Where public employment programmes are part of, or delivered alongside, social protection initiatives, the design of eligibility provisions should approach disability carefully. Design should not conflate “disability” with “inability to work”; doing so reinforces stereotypes and discrimination.

Green works⁹

Green works offer a wide variety of new areas for employment intensive investments. As such, there are a broader range of possible roles for workers than may have been found in activities like road construction. Some of these roles, like nurseries for trees, could be conducted at home, which will allow for participation of a wider group of people.

In terms of the infrastructure itself, reforms for making infrastructure green are often opportunities to introduce accessibility and universal design.

Community and local-resource based approaches

Inclusion of disability often is part of, and requires, a community-based approach. As we see below, specific efforts are needed to make sure that persons with disabilities are included in community outreach, planning, construction and operations. A community-based approach has mechanisms for participation, and they should be enhanced to make sure that persons with disabilities can meaningfully benefit from them on an equal basis with others.

Part of the community and local-resource based approaches is seeing value and capacity in people. This is a fundamental shift to be made in disability inclusion, too, moving away from perspectives based on “inability” or other deficits and towards one of seeing capabilities and potential.

Emergency Employment¹⁰

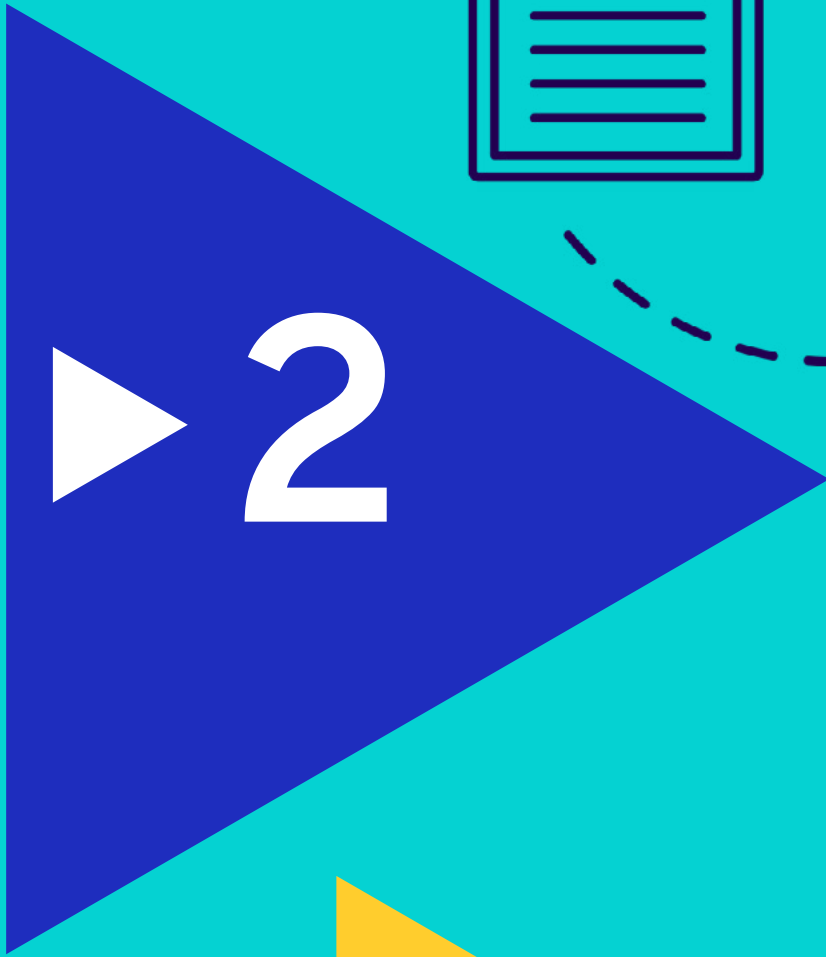
Emergencies – whether natural disasters, accidents or conflicts – often lead to people acquiring disabilities in the populations involved. They may also deepen the barriers to social participation for persons who already had disabilities, for example through worsening conditions of mobility and accessibility or lack of access to services.

Response to an emergency can create solidarity or other mechanisms where those affected, or who had acquired disabilities, are given attention and support to reintegrate. This might happen to those injured in conflict, for example.

⁸ Inter Agency Social Protection Assessments (ISPA), [Social Protection Public Works Programs](#) (2016).

⁹ For more information on disability and climate change, see the ILO policy brief, on [Persons with Disabilities in a Just Transition to a Low-carbon Economy](#).

¹⁰ The key reference for inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action are the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines](#) (2019). They mention the importance of removing barriers in access to cash-for-work programmes.



► Findings

Disability Inclusion in Employment Intensive Investments

Employment intensive investments have often included persons with disabilities as a target population. This is not a new development. For example, ILO projects in Cambodia in the 1990s took special measures to include amputees in works programmes. Before exploring in detail the projects in the four selected countries, this report presents some examples of disability inclusion around the world in employment intensive investments.

Two important international references for employment intensive investments have targets for inclusion of workers with disabilities: South Africa's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

In South Africa, EPWP has a target for 2 per cent of workers to be persons with disabilities. At the start of 2020, participation levels were 1.2 per cent. One review of the programme in urban areas found a lower participation of persons with disabilities, 0.2 per cent of beneficiaries in the cities.¹¹ In 2020, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure committed to further address disability in design, partnership with disability organizations, mainstreaming disability and monitoring and evaluation.¹² The ILO is supporting the programme in this effort to work on disability through development of a framework for a disability inclusive EPWP. Challenges highlighted include insufficient capacity, lack of resources, absence of coordination, insufficient conceptual knowledge, a want of sector-wide ownership.¹³ Both the ILO work and the review in cities mention the challenge of the lack of a harmonized definition of disability and how to identify persons with disabilities.



¹¹ South African Cities Network, [The State of the Expanded Public Works Programme in South African Cities 2019–2020](#) (Johannesburg, 2020).

¹² South African Government, [Media Statement](#), 5 February 2020.

¹³ Draft under development.

Persons with disabilities in MGNREGA



A study has assessed the inclusion of persons with disabilities in MGNREGA as “mixed and uneven”.¹⁴ As well as differences between how different States administered inclusion of persons with disabilities, there was also uneven implementation and results within States. Overall, 2015/2016 saw 0.4 per cent participation of persons with disabilities among 110 million active workers. Actions have been taken on inclusion, including in the operational guidelines. The operational guidelines for implementation give high-level instructions on identification, mobilization, engaging resource agencies, identifying work for persons with disabilities, encouragement for household-based work and a stigma-free environment.



Persons with disabilities report that initially they did not know that they could apply to the programme, and that some who did were turned away from participation in the scheme. Now this is much less likely to happen, at least in the States the study assessed. Much of this is the result of advocacy of organizations of persons with disabilities, and the study also flagged the role of the initiative of individuals within the system in making these changes. There is increasing access of persons with disabilities and, on a State-by-State basis, some modifications have been made to the level of benefit (for example in the number of days of work offered), the type of work, and the possibility to conduct work as a group of disabled people.¹⁵

¹⁴ Information in this box is largely from Lorraine Wapling, Rasmus Schjoedt and Daisy Sibun, “Social Protection and Disability in India”, Development Pathways, Working Paper, February 2021. It researched MGNREGA in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. See also the MGNREGA Operational Guidelines, 4th ed., 2013.

¹⁵ The study explores the pros and cons of persons with disabilities working as a group. On the one hand, persons with disabilities reported that they could make further adaptations and face less stigma when working together. On the other hand, a segregated approach was not preferred.

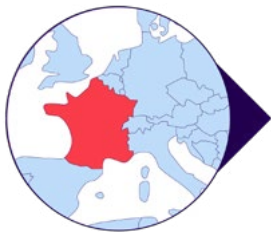


Participation of people with disabilities increased where actions had been taken, but it remained low for those with psychosocial disabilities. Some persons with disabilities resented that the work had been allocated in a stereotyped way related to their impairment. In some cases, persons with disabilities were not being allocated work. However, inclusion in this programme has changed the position of persons with disabilities in the community: getting income, respect and standing in the community. For many, it was the first time that they got any employment. Opportunities to build on inclusion in MGNREGA include expanding the notion of what constitutes work: for example by extending it to include personal assistance (simultaneously creating further employment opportunities and a mechanism to support persons with disabilities in the programme).



Our report can draw important lessons from the MGNREGA experience. Execution depends on people: on the initiative of those making policy as well as on the attitudes of those recruiting at the local level. Civil society and disability organizations played a vital role at policy level and delivery. Their action raised the standards of the programme to include persons with disabilities, supported the implementation of the programme and facilitated the participation of disabled people. MGNREGA also shows persistent challenges of barriers in transport, limitations in accessibility of sites and the way in which blunt measures on disability, like allocating specific occupations or work modalities, can also create barriers for some. The study on which this section is based also demonstrates the utility of specific research on disability and the reasons why it is needed.

Outside of these key reference points, and the ILO work that we highlight below, other actors have taken action to include persons with disabilities. This research did not attempt a comprehensive review, but it can highlight some selected cases:



- **In France**, there is a useful example of how a high-income country can take measures for the long-term unemployed. A partnership with the national fund for employment of persons with disabilities provided enhanced capacity for the employment-oriented enterprises. On average, these enterprises then employed 23 per cent of people with disabilities.¹⁶



- **In Malawi**, there was support from Germany to pilot mainstreaming of disability in public works programmes. The main challenge highlighted was attitudes, and discrimination from communities decreased when they saw disabled people contribute to the programmes. Beneficiaries were also linked with savings programmes and were given a chance to develop their skills. The pilot led to 157 participants, or 5 per cent of beneficiaries, being persons with disabilities in the areas in which it worked.¹⁷



- **In Peru**, Trabaja Perú generated temporary employment for 4,800 persons with disabilities in 2021, 3 per cent of the employment generated. As well as being prioritized, activities were adapted for the capabilities and skills of the persons with disabilities, so they could access the scheme without discrimination.¹⁸



- **In Rwanda**, a household income and expenditure survey showed of those who had participated in the Vision 2020 Umurenge Program (VUP) in the past 12 months, 3.2 per cent were persons with disabilities.¹⁹ Support from the United Kingdom engaged a partnership with the National Union of Disabled Organizations of Rwanda to assess and support the programme to be more inclusive, and a new scheme of less labour-intensive work was put in place.²⁰

16 Territoires Zéro Chômeur de Longue Durée (TZCLD), [L'Agefiph: partenaire incontournable de l'expérimentation](#)".

17 Selvi Vikan and Katharina Diekmann, [Leave no one behind – mainstreaming disabilities in national public works programmes](#), *Rural 21* (2017).

18 Government of Peru, Press Release, "[Trabaja Perú ha generado empleo temporal para más de 4 800 personas con discapacidad durante el 2021](#)" (16 October 2021).

19 Stephen Kidd and Krystle Kabare, "[Social Protection and Disability in Rwanda](#)", Development Pathways, Working Paper, August 2019.

20 Independent Commission for Aid Impact, [DFID's Approach to Disability in Development: A Rapid Review](#) (May 2018).

Disability inclusion in ILO projects and programming

Various ILO projects have taken actions on disability inclusion. These measures start with generic commitments to non-discrimination. Where they are more developed, they use specific targets backed up by measures to include persons with disabilities. They often show that disability inclusion has been on the agenda of the given project, with actions taken, but not in a comprehensively mainstreamed way. The Employment Intensive Investment Programme as a whole has some capacity on this issue: There is some mention of disability in EIIP documentation, but the larger capacity is held in colleagues' experience and practice. Prior to this research, it had not been systematized.

Several projects use targets for the inclusion of a percentage of workers with disabilities. Often, substantial efforts to meet these targets are adopted through project phases, and the need for outreach and mobilization is shown by the target not being met. Frequently, there is flexibility for persons with disabilities to take differing roles as an alternative to the harder physical work. These efforts have been accompanied by capacity building of stakeholders, contractors and the community, but the capacity building on disability has most frequently been a brief session as part of other activities. There are some cases of accessible infrastructure and partnership with disability organizations, but these are limited and sporadic. Where persons with disabilities have been included, they have often been featured in ILO communications.

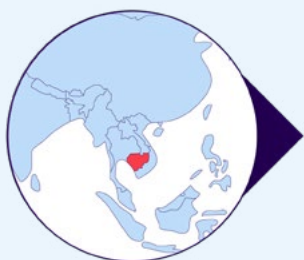


Photo 3. Jordan, Greater Ajloun municipality. Group of workers with cleaning the grass in a graveyard, ILO Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme, Phase 5, 2021.

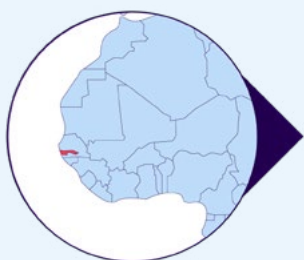
This range of efforts and practices on disability inclusion provide a useful base from which to develop further work. It will be important to include disability more systematically in wider programmatic work, such as employment impact assessments,²¹ as well as in project design, implementation and monitoring. Further development would take more substantive measures for inclusion to realize the non-discrimination commitments made. As well as deepening efforts on inclusion of workers and engagement with communities on this issue, it will also be important to give more attention to efforts on accessible infrastructure and meaningfully including disability in policy work. While inclusion of workers with disabilities will remain the primary goal, a mainstreaming perspective is needed to ensure that other supports, like skills development, are also inclusive of persons with disabilities.

ILO projects and inclusion of persons with disabilities

In addition to the countries explored in depth below, desk review and interviews with colleagues highlighted selected initiatives from different countries.



In Cambodia, in the 1990s, the ILO made efforts to include those injured by conflict and mines or other explosions. There was a general recognition that this group needed support, and in one area some 10 per cent of workers involved in clearing vegetation were persons with disabilities.²² The ILO developed guidelines on accessibility, including adapted designs of hand-tools, based on trials with a specialist.²³ However, project experience showed that some persons with disabilities preferred to be “treated as equals” and not to use the adapted technology.



In Gambia, the 2018/19 project to employ youth to build sustainable peace included 10 workers with a hearing disability, 4 per cent of total workers.²⁴ One person with disability featured in ILO communications commented that this was “the first time that we are well integrated into the public work”.²⁵ There were equal numbers of men and women with disabilities, and sign-language translation was provided.²⁶

21 Up to this point, these assessments have not assessed the inclusion of a person’s disability, but some project-level evaluations have done so.

22 ILO, [The Work of Giants: Rebuilding Cambodia](#) (Bangkok, 2002).

23 ILO, [Handbook: Accessibility and Tool Adaptations for Disabled Workers in Post Conflict and Developing Countries](#) (Geneva, 1997).

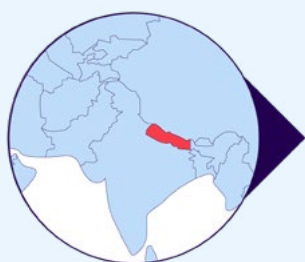
24 ILO project page, [250 Gambian youth engaged in employment-intensive works to support key sectors of national economy](#).

25 ILO, [“People with disabilities should have equal opportunities to work and contribute to society”](#) (October 2019).

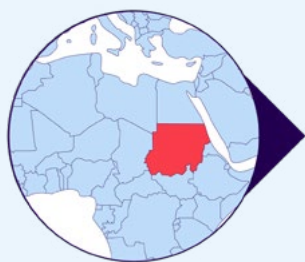
26 ILO project brief, [Employment Creation for Youth to Build Sustainable Peace in The Gambia](#).



In Lebanon, current EIIP initiatives for host communities aim for an inclusion of 2 per cent of persons with disabilities and are currently achieving 4.3 per cent. The project developed guidelines for employment intensive projects with substantial guidance on persons with disabilities.²⁷ The project is working with the Ministry of Social Affairs to develop accessibility of social development centres with ramps, adaptations to entrance areas and bathrooms. Contractors receive a brief training on disability, and they are obliged to include a description of how they will approach this issue in a local development statement. Social safeguard officers have helped the project approach being implemented at each site. The project mapped civil society organizations working on disabilities and work with them is complemented by the data that local authorities have on disability.



In Nepal, the Strengthening the National Rural Transport Program made work provisions for persons with disabilities and included 7 persons (0.2 per cent) in road maintenance groups.²⁸



In Sudan, EIIP initiatives feature a humanitarian partnership supporting refugees, PROSPECTS, and a works programme in an informal area in Khartoum. Both initiatives are targeting persons with disabilities. PROSPECTS targets 3 per cent inclusion of persons with disabilities, and this is featured in agreements with the implementing partner and its contracts with contractors.

²⁷ ILO, [Employment Intensive Projects in Lebanon: Guidelines](#) (2020).

²⁸ ILO, 2021, [Project Brief](#).

► Jordan



In Jordan, the Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme set a target of 3 per cent inclusion of persons with disabilities. Initially, the project did not meet this target, but now exceeds it with 5 per cent inclusion of persons with disabilities. The project team reports that this is often made up of people with “light” disabilities. The project increased participation of workers with disabilities by taking actions to do so and making adaptations. Some of these adaptations are similar to those made to increase participation of women, such as allowing a family member to be present on the same work site or allowing more days of work. Persons with disabilities have worked, for example, in debris collection, checking reports and municipality offices.

The results of inclusion are mixed. There are certainly positive results, and one colleague described the transformative effects of inclusion as “one good thing will lead to another”. There are reports of some persons with disabilities being highly motivated and working at a high level within the project. One person with disability shared how inclusion had changed his life:

►► I stayed for a long time (13 years) at home without any income or job until I saw an announcement ... requesting recruitment of workers within community works ... There has been a radical change in my life financially, psychologically and socially, as I felt the value of myself as I became self-supporting and whoever lives with me, it was a wonderful feeling, as I built excellent relations with the workers.

Mohamed Khaled.²⁹

However, preliminary findings from project tracer studies raise concerning findings about inclusion. The tracer studies analysed focus groups with workers with disabilities, and they report that many of the workers with disabilities were not performing the work tasks. In some cases, their work consisted of lighter tasks or was supported or covered by their colleagues and supervisors. One worker reported

²⁹ Featured in August 2021 internal monthly update.

taking a wage and not going to the worksite at all. Another disturbing finding of the tracer studies was the percentage of persons with disabilities reporting that they did not have access to toilets or washing stations – 80 per cent in phase 3, and 40 per cent in phase 4.

As such, inclusion in the project ranges from effective and transformative to superficial compliance that may be reinforcing discriminatory stereotypes. Gaps in meaningful inclusion are made further complex. However, the same tracer studies that showed this limited participation also displayed high levels of satisfaction. Even where employment objectives are not being met, activities may contribute to social participation.

An interview with an organization of persons with disabilities in the project area highlighted the barriers in attitudes and shame relating to disability. The organization advised that challenging the existing attitudes on disability would be at the heart of successful inclusion and would in turn enable allocation of work according to abilities. Furthermore, the meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities in road maintenance activities would offer an important, and novel, example to change attitudes even further.

► Philippines



ILO EIIP projects in the Philippines have responded to a series of crises over the past decade. As well as focussing on the current EIIP project on water supply, this study benefits from reflections of colleagues involved in the responses to previous crises.

EIIP Crisis Response in the Philippines

Colleagues shared the community-based approaches that were used to respond to crises and deliver EIIP as part of recovery. Community solidarity, combined with encouragement from ILO, led to inclusion of persons with disabilities. Inclusion and mobilization were realized through this internal support system within the community itself. Disability did not necessarily feature

in the project documentation (it is not included, for example, in the project documentation relating to the response to Typhoon Haiyan in 2013–15). However, a social inclusion approach from project colleagues, combined with increased national attention to this issue, meant the projects did see some practical action.

Persons with disabilities were included in different roles. Colleagues mention, for example, procurement, construction or time-keeping activities. For some persons with disabilities, it was the first time that they

were introduced to the use of personal protective equipment and practical skills training and were linked with social security, banking or health insurance. Community infrastructure developed through the project improved mobility and helped all members of the community access assets more easily. One project partnered with a disability organization to deliver work and accessible infrastructure for persons with disabilities.³⁰

Water Supply and Sanitation Services in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

The current EIIP intervention in Philippines did not explicitly refer to disability in its concept note, but efforts have been made for inclusion. There is no specific target for inclusion of persons with disabilities, but disability is mentioned in the implementation agreement, as well as in the works contracts between the implementing partner and community contractors. Disability is included in community orientations, monitoring of implementation and briefly in the orientation of local government officials.

In the worksites completed so far, there are around ten workers with disabilities (1.4 per cent of all workers). Reported experience of inclusion is mixed. The implementing partner shared that there are two foremen with disabilities “making a big contribution to the project”, with each of them supervising over 100 workers. One of the foremen is deaf and this leads to some communication challenges on the site. Some worker groups had negative reactions to people with disabilities on their teams, as they were worried about the impact on productivity.

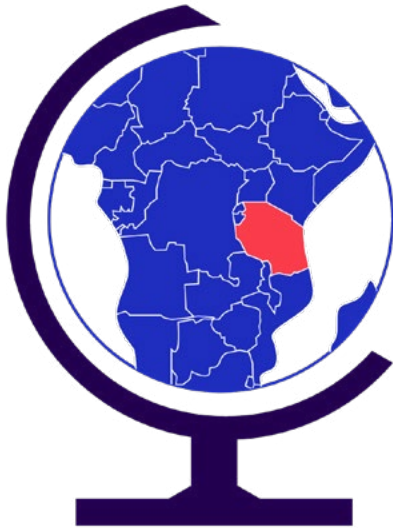
The project had not considered the accessibility of infrastructure created. This is especially relevant for infrastructure, such as tap-stands, that will have public use. The implementing partner identified the possibility of ensuring that the tap-stand design includes a ramp for wider accessibility.

Interviews with representatives from organizations of persons with disabilities in BARMM highlight how disabled people are excluded from government cash-for-work programmes and other livelihood initiatives. They report that, while many disabled people are not in work, those that are working do so in a range of livelihoods, including haircutting, fishing, massage therapy or tricycle driving. This shows the skills and capabilities that are present in this group that could be harnessed in job sites during construction and in their medium-term maintenance work. The informal livelihoods pursued means that it will be important to recognize skills developed out of formal professional contexts, and opportunities for further skills development need to be provided. These interviews also showed that there a range of disability actors in the region with whom the project could engage, from both international and local initiatives. There are focal points on disability at each Barangay.

The interviews with persons with disabilities also highlight the challenges with regard to access to water supply. As well as availability, affordability was one of the most important issues, highlighted in the cost of installation and cost of use.

³⁰ The organization was the Foundation for These-Abled Persons, and its website features some of the broader work it did in response to Typhon Haiyan ([accessed 3/12/2021](#)).

► Tanzania



The policy context in Tanzania offers important opportunities for groups of persons with disabilities. An amendment to the Public Procurement Act reserves 30 per cent of government contracting of goods, services and workers to vulnerable groups. Of this, 10 per cent is for groups of persons with disabilities. However, these groups of persons with disabilities are less established than women's or youth's groups that are also anticipated to benefit from the allocation. Moreover, there is a mismatch between the services or products that existing groups of disabled people can provide and what the government needs in goods or services. This policy raises questions in terms of its design, but its existence gives a substantial opportunity for persons with disabilities to mobilize and access resources.

ILO EIIP activities in Tanzania are currently focused on supporting the Productive Social Safety Net Programme, a national social protection programme. The ILO project anticipated the targeting of vulnerable groups in its design, including persons with disabilities, but it did not specify activities or objectives. A mid-term evaluation highlighted inclusion issues and recommended an analysis on gender and the "differently-abled". The ensuing analysis features exploration of both gender and disability inclusion.

This process certainly raised the profile of inclusion activities within the project, but to some extent the disability-related focus comes across as an add-on, both in the analysis and the way colleagues understand its use. Some of the technical advice included disability, for instance, in accessibility provisions mentioned in the design of urban parks. But the same manual did not include a discussion of persons with disabilities as workers in these initiatives. That point is mentioned in a manual developed on road maintenance but not explored substantially.

The project is exploring the potential to mobilize groups of persons with disabilities and offers support to the mobilization of vulnerable groups in general. The Public Procurement Regulatory Authority started to cooperate with a disability organization to mobilize these groups in a local community. The authority also reports the need to develop capacity on business skills as well as the opportunity to link with other funds and services, such as loans for vulnerable groups.

The Rural and Urban Roads Agency, working with ILO colleagues on the design of a new project, anticipates creation of community groups made up of members of vulnerable populations.

The agency also highlights the opportunities present in a people-centred road design approach and its potential to transform the construction industry. A people-centred approach is based on developing design through active consultation with people who will be using the infrastructure. One pilot of this approach incorporated views of persons with disabilities and other groups and subsequently adjusted the previous designs drawn up by engineers.

The design of the Productive Social Safety Net Programme and its public works component deserves further exploration. The programme offers a cash transfer for eligible persons who do not have a household member considered eligible to work. Some persons with disabilities will be covered by that cash transfer and others will be included in the public works programme. Eligibility is determined in an initial assessment before a register of people is passed on to the public works programme. It is important to assess whether this design, and its implementation, is creating discriminatory results and/or missing the opportunity to realize the full potential of persons with disabilities.

► Timor-Leste



In Timor-Leste, two EIIP projects are active and taking measures to include persons with disabilities: the Roads for Development Bridging Phase and the Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry projects. Both of them work on road construction.

Roads for Development has maintained a target of 2 per cent inclusion of workers with disabilities from previous phases of the project. While initially this target was not monitored, the project is now achieving an inclusion of 5.6 per cent of workers with disabilities (this data is not broken down by gender). A [Social Safeguards Framework for Rural Roads Works](#) describes the place of disability through the steps in the bidding process and gives guidance on

inclusion in works. To some extent, attention has been paid to accessible infrastructure: for example, through drain covers or handrails put in front of the houses where disabled people live. The project has also developed a framework for disability inclusion in its monitoring and evaluation activities.

Roads for Development project colleagues have mixed views on the quality of inclusion. They report that mobilization of disabled people “does not happen automatically”. It is necessary to share the details of work activities and encourage people to participate. On the one hand, some see 5.6 per cent as “probably an underestimate” – because it is based primarily on visual identification. Others, however, worry that contractors might be hiring people to fulfil the target, or not hiring people with more serious disabilities. Persons with disabilities assume different roles when some road construction activities are not possible: working security in the camp, cooking, counting loads or maintaining the master roll.

The Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry project does not have a specific target for inclusion of persons with disabilities. However, it has addressed this from a decent work perspective and is achieving inclusion of 86 workers with disabilities, 2 per cent of all workers. It is able to use the social safeguard guidelines and some approaches established by the Roads for Development Project. An [ILO article](#) of 2019 features a person with disability who has participated project:

■ I am very happy to be able to have a regular monthly income and because of it, I can now fulfill my family needs. My family now lives better than before because their daily needs are being met unlike before. I intend to use the surplus from my earnings to open a small business, a kiosk maybe.

► Rui Guterres

Emerging findings from a tracer study of both projects highlight the difficulties in finding persons with disabilities to work on the project. It reports that, of 57 contracting firms, only 9 (16 per cent) report employing persons with disabilities.³¹ The study points to the need for continuous training for the community and stakeholders to raise awareness and respect on this issue.

There has been some partnership with the national organization of persons with disabilities, Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan (RHTO). The organization provided a training to ILO colleagues on disability a few years ago and is preparing a proposal for further training in different areas. It highlights the challenges disabled people face in rural areas, including finding work, low levels of education and discrimination from families.

³¹ The tracer study is under development. Further investigation is needed to determine the distribution of the workers with disabilities across the different firms, as this number seems strange given overall participation levels.



Photo 4. Timor Leste, Baucau municipality. Women working with a woman-owned company, spreading gravel against the background of the Matebian mountain range on the Defawasi Junction 2 – Alaua Leten road. ILO ERA Agroforestry Project.

▶ 3



► Analysis

Inclusion in the project cycle and project management

The experience of EIIP work on disability inclusion highlights important points for project design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Furthermore, the experience shows important feedback loops between evolving project cycles, as different phases of projects develop their ability to act on this issue.

Project design

Project design makes an important contribution to a project's ability to take disability inclusion forward. As one colleague put it, disability inclusion is "not easy, but if you include it from the beginning, it's a little bit easier". Projects have done this most frequently through a target percentage for inclusion of workers with disabilities. Inclusion in project design, however, does not guarantee an inclusive project. Moreover, some projects have taken actions on inclusion without it being stipulated in their project designs.

In terms of design not necessarily leading to inclusion in practice, colleagues described how these measures can have a superficial presence. One colleague described how standardized text can lose meaning: "Inclusion at project stage is blah blah blah, click and done". Another colleague described commitments made through projects, when not accompanied by substantive efforts, as "just lip service".

As we have also seen, some projects did not stipulate disability in their project designs but did take measures for inclusion of disabled people. Colleagues often understand this as part of "decent work". In Timor-Leste, the fact that the Roads for Developed project had a target for, and experience working on, disability inclusion, with guidelines that included an approach on this issue, meant that the sister project, Enhancing Rural Access, also took comparable measures.

That example provides a good insight into the iterative process through which inclusion happens. It was with the influence of the donor, Australia, that Roads for Development adopted the target initially.³² Furthermore, the donor, with its technical partner CBM Australia, provided support to the project implementation and capacity on disability.³³ Targets or other commitments in design were not necessarily acted on substantially to begin with – such as in Jordan or Tanzania – but when reviews and monitoring showed the gaps, further action was taken.

The iterations show the gaps, the need for more substantial action and the necessity to allow the project to develop its ability to do this. Similarly, ILO colleagues with personal experience of disability in one project often took this to the next place they worked. It is not just ILO projects that develop inclusion in an iterative way: In the MGNREGA experience, we see that inclusion was developed through implementation, including through reacting to experience and external impulses from civil society.

³² Australia has promoted disability inclusion in its development activities. The Enhancing Rural Access project had a different donor and did not include the target.

³³ One colleague mentioned that a particularly important aspect of this was the availability of someone to discuss ideas and answer questions.

It will be important for EIIP to consider how to enhance a more systematic approach in design and how to further capitalize on these learning cycles of inclusion. ILO's Partnership for Development (PARDEV) has resources on inclusion of persons with disabilities in project development,³⁴ and work is carried out on generating a disability marker for ILO projects. This does not, however, fully respond to the specific guidance that EIIP projects will need on inclusion activities in general and inclusion of persons with disabilities specifically.

We explore further below the tension and opportunities between an inclusion-in-general approach and an inclusion-of-persons-with-disabilities approach. In terms of project design, there is a wider question about how EIIP will institutionalize developing approaches on social inclusion across its projects. EIIP does not have its own project appraisal process and as such does not have an institutionalized social inclusion review of its projects. Furthermore, project design processes do not necessarily take measures to include community consultation, which would be essential for deeper inclusion. How EIIP should approach this goes beyond the scope of disability inclusion.



Photo 5 . Jordan, Mouab Municipality. Worker holding the flag to alert the road users to the work ahead. ILO Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme.

³⁴ See, for instance, the [ILO Development Cooperation Manual](#) and accompanying marker.

Project Implementation

From the view of mainstreaming, disability should be present in each area of implementation, not limited to inclusion of workers with disabilities, important as it is. This is the case for policy interventions, stakeholder capacity development and investments in individuals and communities. EIIP initiatives should further disability inclusion with the range of direct implementation and technical advice functions they already use. Mainstreaming will involve both making activities responsive to the situations of persons with disabilities and, where appropriate, specific actions to promote disability inclusion.

Learning from project experiences, colleagues have highlighted various key points in implementation that need particular attention. These issues are fundamental for achieving disability inclusion:

Attitudes on disability. At every level of work, attitudes on disability are important, from persons with disabilities themselves, to community members, contractors, stakeholders, ILO colleagues and policymakers. Persons with disabilities and communities may be used to viewing disability-related support as charitable assistance rather than involving work. This is one of the important attitudes that needs to be challenged, especially when it is enabled by contractors that are not expecting work from persons with disabilities.

Low expectations and stereotyping create discrimination and limit the ability to intervene on these issues. Implementation should anticipate sensitization events and activities. Often, the most powerful examples are successful cases of inclusion, and these will be particularly important to relieve concerns of contractors about taking on an issue that might be new for them. The fundamental shift in attitudes to be made is away from looking at what persons with disabilities cannot do towards what capacities are available and towards actions that ILO projects can take to enable them further.

Capacity on disability inclusion. As well as positive conceptions concerning disability, projects and stakeholders need the technical know-how to implement them. Again, this will be at every level of project work, from the knowledge on how to make policy interventions on disability to the support of stakeholders to take this issue further, as well as in the direct implementation of works programmes. Implementation needs to anticipate these needs for expertise through investments in internal capacity, support from ILO headquarters and partnerships with organizations working on disability. Social inclusion officers are a valuable resource and may need further support to deepen their work on disability; engineers likewise will have responsibility for accessible design.

One important dimension of capacity is that of ILO colleagues themselves. It will be important for headquarters to support colleagues on disability inclusion. Colleagues show goodwill to work on disability inclusion but do not have the structures or guidance to do so. Often, engagement on disability inclusion starts off by focussing on challenges or difficulties that inclusion may face. Much as the challenges identified are often real, this entry point does not necessarily lead to a problem-solving approach. More familiarity with this subject would give EIIP the confidence to use its skills in reaching vulnerable populations and delivering solutions in complex contexts to further work on disability inclusion.

Partnerships to support work on disability. Specialist support can be gained from organizations working on disability, whether NGOs, organizations representing persons with disabilities or government agencies. In Lebanon, the local government agencies have good data on persons with disabilities. In Timor-Leste, the disability organization has provided training to ILO colleagues on disability equality. As the case of MGNREGA shows in India, engagement with civil society can really raise ambitions for inclusion and support implementation.

Specialist support may require institutional capacity building. Disability organizations should not be treated as a ready-made solution to ILO issues. These partnerships, especially with civil society, should be resourced. As well as the capacity challenges which they face as grassroots organizations, there is no reason to expect them to have technical capacity on EIIP issues or to have members of persons with disabilities in the areas that ILO is working. They do, however, often have the skills and experience to carry out such a mobilization. With exposure and capacity building on EIIP issues, disability organizations would be able to provide deeper advice and mutually develop solutions on ILO issues. Furthermore, one suggestion resulting from interviews is that the ILO should not limit its partnership to one organization.³⁵

Procurement.³⁶ Implementation of public works takes place through complex combinations of implementing partners, government agencies, contractors and community groups. In different contexts, these actors have quite different capacities in general, and even more so on disability issues. Disability inclusion should be stipulated in tenders, contracts and bills of quantity, as projects have already started to do. Furthermore, active contract management is particularly important on inclusion issues to mitigate the risks of fulfilment on paper but not in practice.



Photo 6. Jordan, Bergish Municipality. Workers clearing roads, ILO Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme, Phase 5, 2021.

³⁵ Different organizations will be able to respond in different ways and different levels of meaningful contribution to ILO activities.

³⁶ Procurement of construction works are seen as high-relevance for disability-inclusive procurement in the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy. See the [Procurement Guidelines](#) under indicator 8 of the strategy.

Monitoring and evaluation

Mixed results and differing perspectives of project colleagues on the extent and quality of inclusion reiterate the need for clear monitoring frameworks on disability inclusion.

Inclusion of specific targets in design and monitoring their fulfilment is the most frequent measure taken by projects to assess disability inclusion. This is essential but it is not, as the findings have shown, enough by itself: it does not show the quality of the inclusion. Further steps should be taken to mainstream disability in regular monitoring processes – such as tracer studies and evaluations. As has been explored in Roads for Development in Timor-Leste, data collection also has barriers and measures should be taken to ensure participation of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, specific studies on inclusion (in general, or disability inclusion in particular) would be vital to obtain qualitative information on the state of inclusion and the processes that enable it.

The Cost of Inclusion

One of the tensions running through the project cycle is the time, resources and attention that disability inclusion might need. Good work costs money, and inclusion should be resourced. If it is anticipated from the beginning, it appears less as an extra cost or burdensome on the ILO project. As EIIP colleagues themselves have highlighted, disability inclusion is a part of the decent work mission in the ILO's work.



There is, of course, also a cost of exclusion. Failing to act on disability inclusion will lead to ILO work creating discriminatory processes, excluding populations who could have most to gain from these interventions and failing to utilize the full potential of beneficiaries.

Investment in quality work is one of the reasons that donors seek out the ILO to implement these projects. Furthermore, investment in disability inclusion is directly in line with EIIP goals of giving people access to work and creating assets that benefit all. Investment in inclusion increases the effectiveness of these interventions.

► Intersectional challenges and approaches

The intersection between disability and other identities is hard to explore with the available data and the extent of evidence that projects have available. Colleagues have some experience that speaks to intersectional issues, but there have not been systematic approaches to understand the deeper connections. There is a long way to go even in the case of relatively simply data disaggregation.

The context in which these projects act show why taking an intersectional view would be important. The water supply and sanitation in BARMM in the Philippines, for example, operates in an area where conflict remains sporadic, projects work in areas with conservative attitudes to women and indigenous groups are cautious about active engagement. How disability intersects with gender and indigenous issues, let alone the situation of (post-)conflict, will be essential to understanding both those issues and disability issues.

While full investigation of these issues belongs more to social science than to a public works project, the EIIP initiatives need to be advised that a one-size-fits-all approach will limit their effectiveness and ability to respond to the situation on the ground and individual realities.

Even within disability issues, further assessment is needed. To some extent, the inclusion of persons with disabilities has been of cases perceived as “easier”: people with less profound disabilities, for example. As such, projects practicing inclusion may also, directly or indirectly, be discriminating against the persons with disabilities not anticipated within those “easier” cases. Projects in Jordan and Lebanon reported some more complex situations, including of persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. Here, the context of social exclusion of persons with disabilities extends to financial and legal barriers to opening a bank account or the legal capacity to sign a contract. The projects have navigated this external challenge, for example by the Jordan project mediating a solution with the bank.³⁷

Another important aspect of intersectionality is how approaches on different inclusion issues combine. In theory, there is strong overlap between these issues and their areas of intervention. Disability inclusion and gender equity, for example, share approaches and points of intervention:

- consultation on differentiated needs;
- raising awareness and challenging stereotypes;
- mechanisms for inclusion in work through, for example, diversification of location and roles, flexible worktime and support from family members;
- ensuring that infrastructure and assets can be used by all.

³⁷ The solution in this case was to pay the wage to the person's family, which is certainly not ideal. The ILO has to navigate the existing legal norms even where they are discriminatory.

Similarly, approaches that are community-based offer important overlaps with approaches for disability inclusion: responding to existing capacity and adjusting existing approaches accordingly. In Tanzania, the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority recommended using the same approach to mobilize groups of persons with disabilities as had been used for women. Furthermore, disability inclusion could offer benefits for those other approaches. They help projects respond to the diversity among women, for example, and reach a wider range of people in the community. Using universal design in infrastructure will make it more usable by all.

However, in practice these commonalities are not always found. Activities for gender equity or disability inclusion do not necessarily complement each other. In the case where an “inclusion” approach is taken, it can end up not responding to the needs of specific populations. Much as EIIP projects practice “community participation”, they often are not able to take the specific measures to ensure that all groups can participate equally. As such, these methods become vehicles for inadvertently not doing the thing they are supposed to do.

A fresh attention is needed to see if there is a way to take “inclusion” approaches that bring these actions together meaningfully. The similarity in approaches offer a necessary synergy, particularly in the context of projects executing rapidly with limited resources.

► Discussion

This review identified a number of technical areas that are challenging in implementation and in securing inclusion of persons with disabilities as workers. The process of outreach, mobilization and securing decent working conditions raises a number of hurdles or needs advice to navigate. The issue of accessible infrastructure was one of the less explored areas of inclusion, and it also has its own challenges, especially where capacity on the issue of accessibility does not exist.

Quality of inclusion. As with disability inclusion in MGNREGA, disability inclusion in EIIP is “mixed and uneven”. Alongside some good practices, there are concerning reports about persons with disabilities not performing work tasks. The danger of “fake work” is well known: persons with disabilities are involved to meet a target but are not working.³⁸ Further research, involving field work, would be needed to assess the quality of inclusion of persons with disabilities. The tracer studies in Jordan show the importance of qualitative studies that can get beyond overall numbers. They also speak to the need for inclusion to be more closely monitored and managed. Inclusion needs a more hands-on approach to social issues than EIIP may have traditionally been able to provide.

³⁸ It often features where there are quota targets in regular employment.

Mobilization and identification of persons with disabilities. Project experience shows that mobilization of persons with disabilities needs proactive outreach. It is not enough to call a consultation meeting without specific attention to this issue. As well as explicitly emphasizing that persons with disabilities will be welcome, specific measures for outreach and ensuring that the meeting will be accessible and inclusive are needed. Advertisements that are specific about the roles of work that are available have been shown to be effective, and efforts should be taken to distribute them in diverse ways.

Identification of persons with disabilities is challenging for ILO colleagues and often national stakeholders as well.³⁹ Policy should approach the identification of disability in a broad sense and give some guidance for how implementers should navigate this question. Some colleagues worried that persons might be identified as being persons with disabilities when they were not.

A discussion with a disability organization in Jordan suggested using a range of methods to identify disability. As well as “visually” identifying people as having disabilities, alternative methods to be used include medical reports or identification by organizations focusing on disability. Furthermore, people know each other in communities and can provide additional verification.

These methods remain imperfect, and with every practice of identification, projects should reflect on what is gained by being rigorous about this. Inclusion and adaptations can be practiced without requiring individuals to provide a certificate. Monitoring to see how a target is being met can be done by using the Washington Group questions (discussed above).

“Appropriate jobs” for persons with disabilities. This is another key concern raised by colleagues. As noted above, projects have already approached this issue by providing less physically intense roles. Some project guidelines have given indications of the types of job for types of disability. One motivation for issuing these guidelines is the fact that projects are implemented by actors who have limited capacity or resources concerning disability inclusion. Clear guidelines can provide reassurance in an intricate context with a challenging technical subject.

Integral challenges on “appropriate” jobs are safety issues and how the work is conducted on site. In terms of safely conducting work, colleagues in Jordan raised the issue of whether deaf people or people with intellectual disabilities could safely work on road maintenance. In terms of work on the site, there are concerns about communications and the ability of supervisors to manage this.

³⁹ Even in the case of centralized registration systems identifying persons with disabilities, these should not be taken as the only persons with disabilities in the country.

Unfortunately, such a complexity of diversity and implementation of works cannot be resolved entirely by neat guidelines. There is the profound risk of reinforcing stereotypes; given the diversity of disability, it is often not possible to make meaningful generalizations. For instance, in the seemingly simple question of whether a deaf person can work on maintenance of a road with traffic, there is no simple answer, as each person's situation is so different, let alone the conditions of the road traffic. The project in Jordan is also finding its own solutions in implementing some of these issues, for instance by allowing the presence of family members on the same work sites. The guidelines also usually overlook the way that persons with disabilities can be put into inappropriate roles: for example, in being paid to come to a worksite without doing meaningful work.

The solutions here will be a combination of some general principles, cooperation with disabled people and disability organizations, and navigating issues that emerge on a work site. Beyond that, it is also vital to provide more diverse roles in EIIP initiatives.

Accessible infrastructure. This has different relevance in different areas. Where infrastructure investments will be directly used by the public, it is essential. In other areas, where infrastructure is not to be used by the public, it would be less critical. Furthermore, designs are sometimes provided by the national government or another stakeholder. In those cases, the ILO's role might be to provide advocacy to adjust the designs or to support community participation to develop accessibility modifications. Measures can also be taken

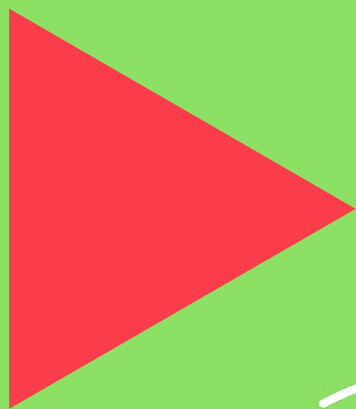
to make worksites accessible and facilitate transportation to them. For example, accessibility to sites would ensure that workers had access to toilets and wash stations, as was shown to be the need for persons with disabilities in Jordan.

With the notable exception in the project in Lebanon that is working with a ministry to develop the accessibility to some offices, accessible infrastructure has, for the most part, not been addressed by EIIP. ILO colleagues will need standards and references to guide them on this. There are some international references to support this activity. On water, sanitation and hygiene, extensive international work has been conducted.⁴⁰ On road accessibility and use, there has been comparatively less work, and given the centrality of road construction to EIIP, the ILO could consider partnerships to explore this issue further.⁴¹

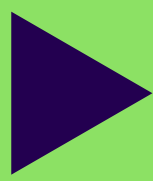
Sustainable change. Even in the face of all the technical challenges explored in this section, ILO projects have already made substantial contributions to inclusions. Many persons with disabilities have benefitted from these opportunities and report that their lives have been transformed. Project communications activities have already raised and disseminated these cases for a wider audience. It is important to carry on using this transformative power of inclusion to contribute to sustainable change. For individuals, it will be important to see the pathways to medium-term employment opportunities, further skills development or links with other services and social protection. For project partners and stakeholders, further capacity on disability inclusion will enable them to act on this issue beyond the ILO project activities. Peer learning is a particularly important method for private sector actors. And at the macro-level, contributions to policy change will establish these methodologies. As colleagues in Timor-Leste commented, ILO projects are including persons with disabilities, and this is an example that other national programmes should emulate.

⁴⁰ See, for example, the International Disability Alliance [Resource Page on Disability-Inclusive WASH](#).

⁴¹ Some references include a [research report on participatory road development](#) in Papua New Guinea, or, in Cambodia, a [Journey Access Tool](#) which developed access audits and road safety in urban areas.



▶ 4



► Recommendations

Programmatic actions at headquarters

For EIIP unit

1. Mainstream disability as a theme through research and technical products, and update EIIP documentation to reflect this priority to include persons with disabilities.
2. Develop research and technical advice on disability inclusion in EIIP.
 - a. Identify opportunities for policy advice.
 - b. Consider specific research on inclusion in road construction and accessible designs of roads.
 - c. Foster learning and exchange on disability inclusion between projects.
 - d. Commission in-depth research on disability inclusion in national programmes.⁴²
3. Support projects to incorporate and operationalize disability inclusion.
 - a. Provide technical backstopping and capacity on disability inclusion.
 - b. Provide resources to support disability inclusion in project implementation.
 - c. Provide disability equality training and technical learning opportunities to staff.
 - d. Ensure that procurement policy and regulations anticipate measures for inclusion and non-discrimination.
4. Assess how to develop a more systematic intersectional approach to inclusion in EIIP.
 - a. Introduce systematic review of project design for inclusion and social issues.
 - b. Further project resourcing of inclusion, for example through more social officers and capacity on specific inclusion issues.

⁴² As, for example, the Development Pathways research cited above on MGNREGA.

Opportunities for Development across the EIIP areas of work

Employment Impact Assessments



- Systematically include disability as one of the lenses of analysis.
- Advocate for inclusion of disability disaggregation in data tools and studies not implemented directly by the ILO, for example in labour force or household income and expenditure surveys.
- Consider targeted studies regarding access of persons with disabilities.

Public and Private Sector Development



- Support public and private sector actors to adopt organizational policies that eliminate discrimination and promote affirmative action (policy is especially relevant for the public sector).
- Raise awareness on disability inclusion, highlight positive examples and promote peer learning (peer learning is especially relevant for the private sector).
- Develop technical capacity on disability inclusion in employment intensive investments.
- Establish partnerships with organizations working on disability and strengthen their capacity to contribute to advising on this issue.

Public Employment Programmes



- Ensure that policy does not establish an equivalency between “disability” and “inability to work”.
- Ensure that public employment provision has a wide range of roles and facilities to ensure wide participation.
- Investigate possibility of an employment guarantee dedicated to, or including as a target group, persons with disabilities.

Green works



- Explore diverse roles for work within green works.
- Ensure greening works also introduce accessibility features.

Community and local-resource based approaches



- Take active measures to outreach to persons with disabilities.
- Ensure that community consultation and mobilization include persons with disabilities.

Emergency Employment



- Take measures to ensure that there are work opportunities for persons with disabilities in emergency contexts.

Pilot initiatives for disability inclusion

Pilot to be jointly supported by EIIP and GEDI disability team. It is recommended that pilot initiatives tackle inclusion on a range of levels:

5. Identify projects under development and include disability from the design and inception phases.⁴³
6. Conduct in-depth assessment of disability inclusion in two or three projects. These could be based around developing disability inclusion strategies for the project and/or getting more into detail of current status of inclusion and barriers.
7. Develop guidelines on disability inclusion in EIIP projects. A concise implementation guideline is needed with clear actions for project design and key points for implementation. These should be co-designed in a workshop with EIIP colleagues. Once created, these would need a programme of rolling-out among colleagues and through EIIP work.

⁴³ Upcoming projects in Nigeria and Sierra Leone are important opportunities.

For disability team in GEDI

8. Provide support to EIIP and its projects to include disability.

- a. Provide sensitization and technical support, including through Disability Equality Trainings and technical advice on EIIP issues.
- b. Gather and provide resources on accessible infrastructure.

9. Explore opportunities on disability and decent work to promote disability-inclusive public works.

- a. Further explore links between public works and social protection and develop guidance to untangle design questions.
- b. Highlight possibility of inclusion in public works as a mechanism in emergency response.
- c. Explore the possibility of an employment guarantee that targets persons with disabilities.

10. Foster connections internationally and at national levels with the disability sector on disability inclusive employment intensive investments.

- a. Invest in, and facilitate engagement of, disabled people and their representative organizations.
- b. Disseminate research findings and highlight relevance of inclusion in public works.

Inclusion in EIIP projects

EIIP projects should anticipate budget and specific activities to further disability inclusion throughout the project cycle.

Project activities should take measures to include persons with disabilities:

► Mobilize persons with disabilities to participate in the project.

- Set up specific measures for outreach, including clarity that the project will include persons with disabilities, detailing tasks of work and dissemination through different media.
- Reach out through disability organizations – through their members or through them supporting mobilization in the project area.

► Ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities as workers and beneficiaries of other supports for work and employability.

- Provide a diversity of roles that can be conducted as work.
- Take measures for accessible worksites and transportation to and from worksites.

Provide adaptations and support where needed for individuals.

- ▶ Develop employment opportunities and environment to be inclusive of persons with disabilities.
 - ▶ Support contractors, businesses and other employers to engage on disability through sensitization and promotion of the “business case” for employment.
 - ▶ Promote or facilitate mechanisms for job-matching for persons with disabilities.
- ▶ Ensure infrastructure and other investment in assets take into account accessibility and, where possible, use principles of universal design.
 - ▶ Develop stakeholder capacity on disability inclusion.
 - ▶ Advocate for inclusive policy in public works schemes and design.
- ▶ Project management should put the structures in place that ensure inclusion:
- ▶ Include persons with disabilities in assessments and planning. Where possible, do this through consultation with disabled people and their representative organizations.
- ▶ Ensure inclusive beneficiary targeting mechanisms. Set targets for disability inclusion, for instance through percentage of workers with disabilities.
- ▶ Form partnerships with resource organizations that work on disability. These partnerships can support mobilization as well as provide technical advice.
- ▶ Specify measures for inclusion in procurement and contract management.
- ▶ Anticipate capacity and partnerships on disability inclusion.
 - ▶ Project human resources to act on disability inclusion. Where possible within the project, social officers can be responsible for disability inclusion issues.
 - ▶ Build partnerships with disability organizations to supplement capacity on technical issues and facilitate involvement of persons with disabilities.
 - ▶ Secure advice from ILO headquarters disability team.
- ▶ Establish monitoring frameworks and approaches to assess disability inclusion.
 - ▶ Disaggregate data by disability (using, for example, the Washington Group questions). Further disaggregate this data by gender.
 - ▶ Project deliverables of activities in the above areas.
 - ▶ Take measures to include persons with disabilities in focus groups, worker surveys, tracer studies and evaluations.
 - ▶ Consider further qualitative research on the inclusion of persons with disabilities and the barriers they face.
 - ▶ If appropriate to the project, monitor numbers of disabled people linked with services, or number of sites made accessible.

Opportunities in selected countries



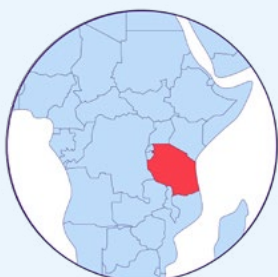
Jordan

- Support the ongoing development of the strategy for inclusion. This should provide measures to extend existing work on disability inclusion. The exchange with Lebanon is positive and useful.
- Perform qualitative assessment of current inclusion.
- Expand work activities to diversify roles.
- Expand work outputs to include accessible infrastructure.
- Approach disability organizations and experts on inclusion for partnership on this issue.



Philippines

- Consider accessible designs of water points. Further work could look in detail at how persons with disabilities can benefit from water systems.
- Ensure that design of any next phase is more explicit about inclusion in project design.



Tanzania

- Develop activities to mobilize groups of persons with disabilities through partnership with civil society organizations that can support this.
- Strengthen mainstreaming of disability across all project activities, not just in terms of mobilization of vulnerable groups.



Timor-Leste

- Provide qualitative assessment of current inclusion.
- Take measures, in policy advocacy and capacity building, so that government works initiatives are inclusive of persons with disabilities.
- Identify opportunities for deeper partnerships with RHTO.

Technical recommendations

Navigating the question of “appropriate jobs”

Guidelines that advise allocation of certain jobs to certain “types” of disability might provide implementers with initial confidence and offer an approach on this issue, but they are not resilient to the diversity of persons with disabilities or even within a given “type” of disability. There are important concerns to navigate: whether a person with disability can do the work, the safety of the work environment and the question of productivity.

Underlying the approaches below is the importance of challenging stereotypes about the work capacity of persons with disabilities. As part of sensitization activities on this, projects should showcase examples of persons with disabilities at work and enable peer learning among contractors and businesses. Sensitization on this issue is important at every level, from persons with disabilities themselves to implementing partners and ILO colleagues.

Ability to perform a work role

All roles can be performed by persons with disabilities. Not every person, with or without disability, can perform every role. The starting point should be to look at:

- Capabilities of persons with disabilities;
- Possibilities to make work environments more accessible and inclusive, through work time, accessibility modifications to equipment and environment, transport to the environment.
- Provision of reasonable accommodations (work adaptations) based on individual needs. This could include modifications to work responsibilities or provisions of access support.

Safety on the worksite

Safety concerns also cannot be generalized. There should not be an overall rule about, for example, whether deaf people can work on road maintenance. The safety depends on the situation on the worksite, the possibility for adaptations and the individuals involved.

Safety concerns should be careful not to be excessively protective. Excessive or disproportionate caution in safety measures may, in effect, be discriminatory against persons with disabilities.

However, work sites need to take into account, and respond to, the specific situations of the work environment and the person with disability. As well as discussion and resolving issues with the persons with disability themselves, in some circumstances careful monitoring and adaptation will be needed.

Productivity of workers with disabilities

All workers have differing productivities. The experience of EIIP work shows persons with disabilities having higher productivity than other workers; but it also shows persons with disabilities with the same or lower productivity than other workers.

Concerns that originate both from stereotypes and from real difficulties should, where possible, be addressed by developing mechanisms that enable participation of persons with differing productivity levels without prejudicing work teams or contractors.

Approaching partnerships on disability

Partnerships on disability may be formed with government agencies as well as civil society organizations. It is important to differentiate organizations *working on disability* and organizations *of persons with disabilities* that are run by persons with disabilities. The latter, known as Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (or Disabled People's Organizations), are the representative organizations of persons with disabilities.

As noted above, colleagues should not expect that these organizations are already prepared to address the specific concerns of employment intensive investments. As well as resourcing, they may need capacity development on the technical side of employment intensive investment.

Partnerships may be formed to address some or all of the following issues:

- Consultation with persons with disabilities in project design and implementation.
- Mobilization of persons with disabilities on worksites, through existing networks, organizational membership or data, or through support of the organization to mobilize persons with disabilities.
- Support in implementation of activities, for example through accessibility or other modifications.
- Coalitions developed to perform policy advocacy.
- Sensitization on disability awareness to communities, implementers and ILO staff.

► Annex: Interviews conducted

Interviews were conducted in November 2021.

Headquarters

1. María Teresa Gutierrez
2. Stefan Tromel, GEDI
3. Claude Yao Kouame
4. Emanuele Brancati
5. Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song
6. Chris Donnges
7. Julia Gin, Procurement
8. Tomoki Watanabe

Regional EIIP Specialists

9. Tomas Stenstrom
10. Bjorn Johannessen
11. Henry Danso
12. Asfaw Kidanu

Jordan

13. Simon Done
14. Qais Khrais

Focus group with project engineers:

15. Hazim Abu Issa
16. Tha'er Ziyadneh
17. Ahmad Adamat

Discussion with project colleagues:

18. Farah Al Azab
19. Mohammad Sirhan

Discussion with disability organization, facilitated by Mohammad Sirhan:

20. Wedad Al-Ahiwi, The White Window Association for Persons with Disabilities

Discussion on development of inclusion strategy. Joined by Simon Done, Qais Khrais, Farah Al Azab and, from the Lebanon office:

21. Rita Abou Jaoudeh

Philippines

22. Jennylyn Aguinaldo
23. Josefa Bacal

Implementing Partner:

1. Zacaria Salik, A Single Drop for Safe Water (ASDW)

ILO colleagues who worked on crisis response programmes:

2. Honorio Palarca (retired)
3. Martha Espano

Interviews with disabled people in BARMM led by Abner Manlapaz, performing consultancy support to the assignment:

4. Jovita Bautista Lacayanga of Wao Lanao del Sur, Member of Kilikili East Persons with Disability Organization and Wao Persons with Disability Federation
5. Annah Sharon Anaud Bedolido, President of Municipal Association of Persons with Disabilities in Upi
6. Dinna Kanda of Datu Piang, Maguindanao, President of Datu Piang Persons with Disability Organization, Focal Person of Persons with Disability Affairs Office
7. Nestor I. Cabigas, JR. designated person with disability focal person by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Development, BARRM, Maguindanao.

Tanzania

8. Dampu N. Ndenzako
9. Donald Limbe Mpuya
10. Mwanaisha Mollel Public Procurement Regulatory Authority
11. Joha Slim, Tanzania Rural and Urban Roads Authority
12. Paul Kijazi, Tanzania Social Action Trust Fund

Timor-Leste**Roads for Development**

13. Peter Howard Smith
14. Vanessa Perry Caetlyn
15. Amanda Kuppers
16. Laxman Thakuri
17. Un Yat

Enhancing Rural Agriculture

18. Albert Uriyo

Focus group with Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry (ERA) colleagues:

19. Andre Faria, Private Sector Coordinator
20. Donato Pinheiro, Training Coordinator, Don Bosco Training Centre
21. Domingos Deus, Government counterpart, Monitoring Evaluation Information Officer
22. Maria Cabral, Community Development Officer
23. Evangelino Carmona, National Training Engineer



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Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI) Conditions of Work and Equality Department
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