



Evaluation Summary



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ILO Disability Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2014-17

Quick Facts

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Administrative Office:	<i>GED Branch</i>
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Background & Context

Summary of the strategy

ILO has a long-standing commitment to promoting social justice for persons with disabilities. The development and ratification of the ILO Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159) and the Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace of 2001 are two early successes which have guided ILO's work on disability. More recently, ILO has been a strong proponent of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). ILO has supported countries to implement a more rights based approach to disability, particularly with regard to social protection and fundamental rights and principles at work.

ILO's Governing Body endorsed ILO's work to promote disability inclusion through GB.316/POL/2.

This led to the development of the Disability Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2014-17. It was developed to take account of the views of staff, and evaluation reports and a disability inclusion survey.

The strategy lays out six results, with an additional cross-cutting communication element:

1. Enhanced promotion of international standards relevant to persons with disabilities;
2. Disability perspective reflected in all programming and reporting;
3. Increased attention to people with disabilities in ILO's work with constituents and in its technical cooperation;
4. Disability-inclusive ILO internal practices promoted;
5. Strengthened knowledge base;
6. Strengthened strategic cooperation within the UN system.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The evaluation looked at the implementation and results of the 2014-17 Disability Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan. It included work in the field, both in disability specific projects and mainstreaming, progress made at HQ among various departments, work with external stakeholders including UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and disabled persons organizations (DPOs), and achievements on internal policies related to inclusion and an enabling environment within ILO's offices.

The main purpose of the final evaluation was to assess the performance of the ILO in achieving the six results and cross-cutting theme of the strategy. The TOR required the evaluator to analyze how successful

ILO had been in achieving the results, identifying unintended results, and key enablers and barriers for achievement, collect good practices and lessons learned, and provide recommendations for the design of the next strategy.

The main clients of the evaluation are staff of the GED branch, and line managers and staff in HQ and field offices who are responsible for implementing the disability strategy. Additional stakeholders include UN agencies, DPOs and NGOs who ILO has partnered with during the strategy period.

Methodology of evaluation

This was an internal evaluation, and thus under ILO's evaluation policy can be overseen by project or department administration. The evaluation consisted of a desk review of key documents and websites and two initial Skype briefings with two members of the disability unit (2 men). 21 Skype interviews and 1 in-person interviews with field based staff (12 women & 10 men) and 3 Skype interviews with external stakeholders (2 women & 1 man) were conducted. During the mission to Geneva, a total of 10 interviews were conducted with 11 ILO staff members (5 women & 6 man). 5 workshops sessions were also held during the mission to Geneva. One was conducted by WebEx with 3 field based staff (2 women & 1 man). Four in-person sessions were conducted with 14 ILO staff and were separated into sessions on policy (4 woman & 1 man), program (2 women & 1 man), internal policy (3 women & 1 man), and communication staff (2 men). The Senior Disability Expert and the Disability Officer participated in the workshops. At least two persons with disabilities participated in the evaluation.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The disability unit and GED branch have made some strong steps to advancing disability issues within ILO during the strategy period. Within headquarters in Geneva there has been increased understanding of disability issues among various departments. The Global Business and Disability Network (GBDN) has been strengthened through the involvement of NGOs and DPOs working on disability and the setting up of

national business and disability networks. There has been an improvement in the inclusive environment of ILO's headquarters through attention to physical accessibility and awareness of reasonable accommodation. The disability unit has also engaged with informal champions in different departments.

However, a lot of work remains to be done if ILO is to meet its obligations towards promoting decent work for all workers without discrimination. Disability awareness among staff still remains low, particularly in the field, and disability is not well mainstreamed into ILO's country programmes. In most cases, disability interventions are dependent upon key individuals being interested in disability rather than the issue being institutionalized into ILO's programmes. Support at a senior level at headquarters and the field needs to be given to disability work. In his recent statement to mark the International Day of Disabilities, the Director General (DG) of ILO said, 'Much has been achieved, but more needs to be done by all to make the world of work a world in which people with disabilities are truly and equally included.' This is relevant to ILO itself as well as its tripartite constituents and partners.

Key Successes

- Quality of resources developed by the disability unit.
- Responsiveness of disability unit to requests for support.
- Strengthening of the GBDN.
- Continued work on disability in specific countries.
- Inclusion of disability in manuals and checklists.
- Improvement of an inclusive and accessible environment in Geneva.

Key Challenges

- Low level of resources of disability unit: two full-time staff plus one who is mainly seconded to other work in Geneva and very limited number of disability experts in the field.
- Limited mainstreaming of disability, particularly at a field level.
- The disconnect between the fairly good mainstreaming of disability in DWCPs and the very limited inclusion of disability in CPOs.

- A tendency for disability to be overshadowed by gender within the gender equality and non-discrimination cross-cutting policy driver.
- Lack of knowledge of disability issues among staff.
- Reduced funding opportunities for disability interventions.

Opportunities for next strategy

- Identification and engagement of key staff at a field level.
- High-level endorsement of the strategy and ILO's disability work.
- Inclusion of disability as a prohibited ground of discrimination in the recommendations emanating from the gap analysis of existing ILO standards on discrimination in employment and occupation, namely C.111.
- Partnership development with other ILO branches and inclusion of disability in major ILO initiatives such as Future of Work and Women at Work.
- Engagement of donors who have expressed a commitment to disability.
- Partnerships with civil society, particularly disabled persons organizations (DPOs), at the field level.

Relevance

Overall the evaluation judged the Disability Strategy to be aligned with ILO's 2010-15 Strategic Policy Framework. The Strategic Policy Framework emphasizes the importance of non-discrimination, with each outcome detailing the work which will be done on the cross-cutting policy driver of gender equality and non-discrimination. The 2010-15 document explicitly references disability in outcomes 2, 4, and 10, and includes references to the most vulnerable workers, which would include persons with disabilities, in outcome 5, and non-discrimination in outcome 17. The Disability Strategy laid out a twin-track approach to disability of both mainstreaming within ILO's programmes and disability specific actions. This approach is relevant to the 2010-15 Strategic Policy Framework and the 2016-17 transition period, and remains relevant in the 2018-21 Strategic Framework and the P&B Outcomes, which have been consolidated into 10

outcomes. The Disability Strategy also included the strengthening of technical capacities within ILO through training and support, which aligns with ILO's goal of significantly reinforcing its technical capacities.

Disability is also relevant to ILO's mission and strategic objectives. ILO is founded on the principle of social justice and promotes decent work for all without discrimination. Ensuring persons with disability have access to dignified, fair and productive work opportunities is crucial to achieving this goal. ILO's normative framework through Conventions 111 and 159, as well as Recommendation 168, and its support for the UNCRPD strengthens this commitment. ILO therefore has a duty to ensure the inclusion of disability within its work, and thus the Disability Strategy is relevant to achieving this.

The relevance of the Disability Strategy to staff working on disability issues within ILO was more mixed. Some regularly used the document to guide their work, demonstrate to constituents ILO's commitment to disability, and to persuade their colleagues of the need to consider disability in their work. Other staff were aware of it as a framework but stated it did not impact their day to day work, and some staff admitted they were not aware the strategy existed before being asked to participate in the evaluation, including some staff who implement or support disability programs in the field.

Validity of Design

The twin-track approach within the Disability Strategy was important in ensuring the validity of design. This allowed the disability unit to access relevant opportunities and target resources where they would be most effective. The inclusion of internal practices in the strategy was also important as ILO needed to focus on creating an inclusive environment within its own offices to support the advocacy of the importance of disability to their tripartite constituents.

In reality there has been more focus on disability-specific actions rather mainstreaming, particularly in the field. One of the challenges ILO faces is the

limited awareness of disability issues among many staff. This is less of a problem in Geneva where the disability unit has more regular contact with key staff members in different branches.

Most of the indicative activities included in the action plan of the strategy remain relevant, and of those that have not been achieved, many should be priority areas for the next strategy, particularly those related to field activities. However, some of the indicators and indicative activities included in the action plan were ambitious and hard to achieve, particularly given the resources available, and changes with ILO, meant some indicators were no longer relevant. At the time of design, the disability unit was better resourced because of a large multi-country technical cooperation project. This was surprisingly not renewed, which stretched the resources of the unit quite thin and as such not all of the results have been achieved. Some of the indicators were also difficult to measure and in some cases hard to attribute causality to. There is not a monitoring and reporting process for the Disability Strategy which has reduced the effectiveness of results measurement.

The Disability Strategy also is limited in setting out accountability for results. Although GED is identified as having primarily responsibility for implementation, the action plan requires commitments from branches and offices throughout ILO, both headquarters and the field. It is not clear who is held accountable for ensuring the delivery of results.

Effectiveness

Overall the evaluation judged that ILO has been relatively effective at achieving the expected results of the strategy at headquarters but at a field level success very much varies from country to country and between regions. As the Disability Strategy was quite ambitious in design not all of the indicators have been achieved or activities completed, and this is particularly the case at the field level.

There have been notable achievements within each of the six results. The establishment of national business and disability networks modelled on the GBDN and the development of the GBDN charter, the

engagement of particular branches of ILO including ACT/EMP and more recently ACTRAV, the strengthening of an accessible and inclusive environment in Geneva, the development of disability resources, the continued interaction with other UN agencies and involvement in UNPRPD projects, and work on disability specific initiatives in certain countries were all achievements during this strategy period.

The mainstreaming of disability at the field level is limited. Interview participants believed that many of the colleagues had limited awareness of disability issues and disability would not be included in project proposals unless there was a specific indication of funds being available or a requirement to include it. Countries are required to report on the cross-cutting policy driver of gender equality and non-discrimination, and it was reported by interview participants that disability is often not addressed in the reporting.

Mainstreaming within headquarters is stronger. The disability unit have engaged a number of departments and produced joint policy papers and reports with a strong focus on disability. This includes work with the Social Protection Unit, the Statistics Department, ACT/EMP, and ACTRAV. Disability is also more mainstreamed into internal policies within Geneva. Interns are required to participate in a DET session, the renovations have made the office physically more accessible, and the more attention is paid to the needs of persons with disabilities attending external meetings organized by ILO.

Efficiency

The disability unit has operated on limited human and financial resources. The disability unit receives funds through the regular budget for two professionals, however one has been mainly seconded to other work for the majority of the strategy period. A third is funded through the GBDN for GBDN secretariat work. The vast majority of field and headquarter staff interviewed were keen to stress their appreciation for the speed of response to requests for support from the disability unit and believed the disability unit had been strategic in how they had targeted their resources. That said, most

evaluation participants, particularly those in the field stated the need for more support.

This demonstrates the challenge the disability unit will face in the next strategy period and highlights the importance of mobilizing more support and knowledge at a field level. The Regional Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Specialists could support this as the job descriptions of newly recruited specialists focus on non-discrimination rather than just gender equality. However, they cannot be expected to absorb all of the work on disability within a region, and so securing the support of field specialists in other teams such as ACTRAV, ACT/EMP, Better Work, FUNDAMENTALS etc. is vitally important for the next strategy.

With this goal in mind, a productive use of resources in the early stages of the next strategy would be to focus on increasing awareness of disability at a field level, and reaching out to more donors who may be able to fund disability work.

Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

There are limited human resources dedicated to disability within ILO. The disability unit consists of three experts, but one has been seconded to working on another subject for most of the strategy period. At the field level, since the incorporation of disability within GED, the gender specialists in the regional offices have been increasingly expected to include disability in their portfolio. However, many of the specialists were recruited simply as gender specialists and not all have had their job description updated to reflect the change. Many of the specialists estimated they spent 90% of their time on gender and the remaining 10% was dedicated to all other areas of discrimination. Since Irish Aid funding for disability ceased, the presence of experts dedicated just to disability in the field has been limited to a very small number of countries. At the country office level, an ad hoc system of responsibility exists. Most country offices do not have an officer responsible for disability mainstreaming. In countries where disability work is undertaken, the officer in charge of the project de facto assumes this responsibility and is often seen as the 'disability expert' by their

colleagues. Disability focal points do not exist unless a country director has taken a particular interest in the subject and informally appointed somebody.

Overall ILO staff generally understood the responsibility for technical support on disability to mainly fall upon the disability unit at headquarters. Most field staff indicated they would ask for support from Geneva rather than field colleagues. Although this does mean the quality of ILO's technical response is more standardized, it does mean resources are stretched very thin. The responsibility for mainstreaming disability should lie within the country offices themselves but this is not currently the case. The lack of accountability mechanisms for disability mainstreaming contributes to this. There is no system which requires countries to report on their progress on disability issues.

For the next strategy period, the increased attention to raising awareness of disability among key regional and country staff should be accompanied by a more defined accountability system and reporting requirements, supported by high level endorsement of the strategy. For increased reporting, a balance should be found which supports the monitoring of the implementation of the strategy and gathering of information about interventions on disability but is not regarded as another burdensome reporting requirement. An annual progress report by the disability unit alongside of improved disaggregation of disability statistics and achievements in existing reports are recommended.

Sustainability

There are mixed results on sustainability. The disability unit has been successful in institutionalizing certain results. In particular, the inclusion of disability in PARDEV and EVAL checklists and manuals and the attention paid to accessibility in Geneva are positive developments. The GBDN appears to be sustainable, and the development of its charter is a notable achievement. It is self-funded, and a number of national business and disability networks have been set up during the strategy period. Additionally, in a small number of countries where ILO has worked extensively on disability, the issue is becoming

institutionalized among constituents, and demand for ILO's programmes on disability is forthcoming from them.

On the other hand, the reliance on key individuals at the field level for disability to be included in ILO interventions, rather than the mainstreaming of disability throughout regional and country offices means that many of the interventions do not demonstrate sustainability. This is demonstrated in some country offices where individuals who worked on disability have left, and the attention the country gives to the work is noticeably reduced.

To build on sustainability in the next period, ILO needs to ensure adequate resources are devoted to disability work and efforts should focus on engaging key individuals at a field level. Ensuring higher-level buy-in from the Governing Body, Director General's (DG) office, and other senior management is also critical to help raise the profile of the subject.

Recommendations

1. Conduct regional disability training for key individuals. Individuals to consider include Program Officers, Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Specialists, Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, Resource Officers, National Programme Coordinators, and DW teams.
2. Identify entry points for engaging RDs, CDs, the GB, & DG's Office.
3. Regularly engage field staff through systems such as newsletters, disability tips, Skype calls etc. The goal of this is to constantly remind them of ILO's disability work to increase the likelihood of disability being included in projects, programmes and strategies. Include disability in various training courses such as Gender and FPRW academies in Turin.
4. Coordinate closely with PARDEV and Resource Officers in field offices to identify the most promising donors and where they should be approached (ie their headquarters, Geneva, or the field).
5. Produce one-two pagers on how to include disability in various key project subjects (TVET, Social Protection, youth, elderly etc) which can be used by the field to help approach donors.
6. Consider developing a fund from 1% of airline tickets similar to UNICEF's scheme, to allow countries

to bid for funds to work on improving accessibility or other cross-cutting themes such as greening of their offices.

7. Engage with FUNDAMENTALS and NORMES to ensure that disability is favourably considered and given prominence in the recommendations of the detailed gap analysis of existing ILO standards on discrimination in employment and occupation, as requested by the ILC Resolution on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.
8. Consider the feasibility of setting up a trade union network based on a similar model to the GBDN.
9. Include indicators in the next strategy on engagement of DPOs at the national and international level. This should not just include the GBDN but in other aspects of ILO's work, such as with trade unions.
10. Ensure a stronger accountability mechanism in next strategy. This would include ensuring branches and departments agree on indicators under their responsibility and for shared indicators, a lead department/branch is appointed. ILO should continue to engage in the development of a UN wide disability SWAP as this provide a structure within which ILO is held externally accountability for its actions.
11. Develop a reporting system for the disability strategy itself. Consider an annual progress report by the disability unit, supported by improved disaggregation of disability statistics and targeted activities in ILO's existing reporting systems
12. Develop sections on disability within ILO's evaluation guidance note (particular notes 6 & 12).
13. Ensure disability is included as a marker/search criteria in ILO's external dashboards such as the Development Cooperation Dashboard and internal databases such as IRIS.
14. Develop an accessibility checklist which can be used by field offices.
15. Ensure key field based staff responsible for HR are trained on reasonable accommodation at interviews, accessibility and disability awareness.
16. Require new ILO websites to compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0.
17. Work with DCOMM and other departments to ensure persons with disabilities are affirmed as key value of ILO and included in ILO's communication. Developing recommendations on how to communicate disability issues in various languages would support this effort.