



**Disability audit of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Zambia**

**A report to the International Labour Office (ILO) by**

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## Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
BSS	Basic social services
CRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DET	Disability equality training
DPO	Disabled people's organization
DWCP	Zambia Decent Work Country Programme 2007-2011
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FNDP	Fifth National Development Plan
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HR	Human resources
IASG	Inter-agency support group
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MCDSS	Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NDP	National Development Plan
RCO	Office of the Resident Coordinator (RCO)
ToR	Terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
ZADP	Zambian Agency for Disabled People



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## Summary

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) came into force in May 2008, giving greater priority to disability issues worldwide, including in the work of UN agencies. The UN System in Zambia became the first in the world to commission a disability audit of its United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). This took place in July 2008. The main findings and recommendations appear below.

- The Zambia UNDAF 2007-2010 contains no reference to disability issues.
- Related documentation is similarly “disability-blind”.
- The Government of the Republic of Zambia’s (GRZ) Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) contains a chapter on disability and development which has not to date been a major focus of targeted cooperation between the UN System and the GRZ.
- UN agencies in Zambia report little expertise on disability-related matters, and request capacity-building to address this deficit.
- Consequently it is not viable to include disability issues in any meaningful way in the second half of the current UNDAF. Instead, the time remaining in the UNDAF should be used to build capacity, confidence and competence, with a view to full inclusion in the next UNDAF.
- The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) should assume overall responsibility for this work, perhaps devolving day-to-day responsibility to a taskforce comprising representatives of two or more agencies, drawn from both strategic and operational staff.
- The taskforce should be asked to draw up a plan for preparatory work, to be implemented over the period 2009-2010, leading up to and informing meaningful inclusion of disability issues in the next UNDAF. The plan should be made public at appropriate time, perhaps coinciding with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2008.

In undertaking this programme of work, the UN System in Zambia will be demonstrating the seriousness of its intent to fulfil the requirements of the UN CRPD, and to ensure the full participation of Zambians with disabilities in the development of their country, on a basis of equality with everyone else.

### Note on terminology

Internationally there is debate about the relative merits of the terms “people with disabilities” and “disabled people”. This report uses both forms interchangeably, reflecting accepted usage in different parts of the world.

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# 1. Background

## 1.1 The Zambia UNDAF

United Nations (UN) agencies, in each country in which they are present, collaborate to produce a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). This enables the UN System in each country to relate closely with each other, in line with the UN reform agenda and, critically, with national Government, in order to enhance collaboration and to increase strategic focus and coherence. Each UNDAF lasts for about four years, and is subject to a mid-term review.

The current UNDAF in Zambia covers the period 2007-2010. It outlines the UN's approach to collaborating with the Government of Zambia (GRZ) and provides the framework through which the UN System channels its combined resources to Zambia during the period covered by the UNDAF. The foreword of the current Zambia UNDAF asserts that "the full and effective implementation of this UNDAF would help to ensure the attainment of the Government's Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) 2006-2010". The current Zambia UNDAF is due for mid-term review in 2008.

The Zambia UNDAF 2007-2010 focuses on four outcome areas on which the UN System is concentrating its accumulated experience, technical expertise and financial resources towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). These outcome areas are:

- HIV and AIDS;
- basic social services (BSS);
- governance;
- food security.

Two important issues – promoting gender equality and environmental sustainability – cut across and apply to all the outcome areas.

The BSS outcome, covering health, education and social protection, is coordinated by UNICEF. As part of its 2008 work plan it has made deliberate attempts to identify areas for potential joint programming. For example, UNICEF, in partnership with ILO and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), has established a new joint programme on human trafficking, and joint activities are being identified and undertaken in other areas.

## 1.2 Disability issues and the UN System

It was through the BSS process that it became apparent that the UN agencies in Zambia generally pay very limited – or, in many cases, no – attention to issues relating to disability, whether or not these are interpreted through the rights-based model. This is not least a reflection of the low position that disability issues occupy on the national agenda, for both Government and cooperating partners. In addition, the Zambian organizations representing people with disabilities and advocating on disability are generally weak and are engaged in pursuing multiple agendas (for more on the situation of disabled persons organizations (DPOs) in Zambia, see *Link and Learn*, ILO, Geneva, 2007). In May 2008, however, the Government of Zambia signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) with a view to ratifying it in the future, thus indicating its acceptance of an inclusive approach to disability issues.

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The passing into force of the CRPD in May 2008 also has important implications for UN agencies themselves, and for their activities. These stem from the firm acceptance in the Convention of the rights-based approach to disability issues. This asserts that disabled people are part of the diversity of any society and thus hold the same rights as others. Government accountability to disabled citizens is a critical aspect of good governance and the commitment to human rights which is central to the UN's relationships with governments. In addition, Article 32 of the CRPD addresses international cooperation and references the partnership between international organizations and governments. Article 32(a) refers to the need to ensure "that international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to, persons with disabilities". For more information on the CRPD, see Annex 4, p. 6.

It is therefore incontestable that disability issues must become mainstreamed into UN programmes and operations as part of the rights-based agenda enshrined in the CRPD. Until this year, however, the rights-based approach to disability rarely featured in the corporate mainstream of UN agencies, with the exception of the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP), formulated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, in association with employers' and workers' organizations and supported by the ILO. Compliance with this new direction necessitates all UN agencies to undertake a comprehensive review of existing programmes, projects, strategies and priorities to identify opportunities for mainstreaming disability issues, as well as possible areas for joint programming.

Several UN bodies have already begun major initiatives at corporate level. For example, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), acknowledging that the Convention will change the way in which WHO does its work, has established a Taskforce on Disability to lead the organization's efforts, while the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has declared disability to be a UNDP corporate priority.

In addition, in March 2008 more than 20 UN departments, agencies, programmes and funds pledged their support to the implementation of the Convention through the Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG). The IASG aims to support measures in countries which are party to the CRPD, and within the UN System itself, in order to implement the treaty's provisions and ensure the rights of people with disabilities worldwide. This may hold potential for the work being done on the Zambia UNDAF (see p. 9).

### 1.3 Auditing the Zambia UNDAF

It is against this background of change and potential that the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Zambia decided to examine the current UNDAF. The purpose of what was termed a "disability audit of the Zambia UNDAF" was defined as:

"To contribute to the mid-term review of the UNDAF towards identifying:

- ongoing activities directly targeting disability issues or with strong links to disability
- areas within the UNDAF where disability issues may be mainstreamed
- potential for further joint programming and activities on disability from a rights-based perspective."

This purpose was then expanded into detailed terms of reference (see Annex 1, p. 15). A consultant was engaged, using Irish Aid funding channelled through ILO in Geneva. As a result, the consultant, though essentially working on behalf of the entire UN System in

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Zambia, was based for the information-gathering phase of the audit in the ILO office in Lusaka, and was assisted and supported by ILO staff.

## 1.4 Methodology

The consultant visited Lusaka for eight days in July 2008, during which time she:

- reviewed the UNDAF document, related work plans and other relevant documentation, such as individual agencies' country strategic plans
- held consultations with individual agencies (see Annex 2, p. 16 for list)
- facilitated a debriefing meeting, to which all consulted agencies were invited, in order to present:
  - results to date
  - options for future action.

This report is the end result of the above process.

### *1.4.1 Limitations to in-country activities*

The initial plan for a disability audit of the current Zambia UNDAF, as outlined in the terms of reference, required simplification in the light of realities on the ground:

- **UNDAF content:** Disability is not mentioned directly in the current Zambia UNDAF (see p. 6 for more detail). Neither does it feature in much of the related documentation, such as UNDAF work plans and individual agencies' country strategic plans. It quickly became apparent that the study needed to concentrate on basic issues, such as how to get disability issues included meaningfully in the agenda of the UN System in Zambia, rather than to suggest a layering of initiatives on top of a system which is at present largely unaware of the issues involved in disability inclusion.
- **Response from UN agencies:** While most UN agencies in Lusaka arranged meetings with the consultant, some did not respond positively, despite repeated attempts to make contact. This can be interpreted in several ways, and may relate to the availability of personnel or to a perceived lack of relevance of the subject-matter. Meetings with agencies were generally exploratory rather than detailed, as appropriate to the level of knowledge in the UN System at present.
- **Availability of documentation:** there was both too much and too little documentation to review. In most cases where documents were provided, there was only passing reference, if any, to people with disabilities and disability issues (except for the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP), see p. 6 for more detail). In this circumstance, trawling through a multiplicity of documents becomes meaningless. At the same time, some agencies either did not supply documents (generally because they had no contact with the consultant), supplied them only during the meeting, without copies to take away or web references (so there was time for only the most cursory glance) or provided them in e-formats that refused to open.

### *1.4.2 Potential influence and multiplier effect*

It is important to stress at this stage that the project to undertake a disability audit of the Zambia UNDAF appears to be a first in the UN System worldwide. This means that the UN

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System in Zambia has placed itself at the cutting edge of disability policy and practice at country level. In and of itself this development opens up great possibilities, such as:

- engaging support from the UN System at regional and international level
- enhancing the reputation of Zambia within the UN System
- engaging high levels of cooperation and involvement from GRZ and civil society actors in Zambia.

Most importantly, it can be used as leverage to ensure quality outcomes for Zambian women and men, both young and old, with disabilities.

In the context of such a pioneering move, the simplification of the ToR for the audit (see below) is no impediment. It establishes the possibility of using the process of reviewing the Zambia UNDAF as a way of delineating what needs to be done to start off a process of disability inclusion in a context in which this matter was not previously given meaningful consideration.

### *1.4.3 Refocusing the study*

In order to align the terms of reference with the actual situation on the ground in Zambia, the consultant reframed and simplified the task. This report reflects this reality. It concentrates on:

- assessing the current situation in the UN System in Zambia in relation to disability inclusion, with reference to:
  - the current UNDAF
  - other relevant documentation
  - consultations held with UN agencies in Lusaka
- commenting on the potential for disability inclusion in the Zambian UNDAF, and in UN agencies' individual and collaborative work
- suggesting what needs to be done by the UN agencies in Zambia in order to prepare for full disability inclusion in the next UNDAF, how to do it, and when
- considering how to include disability issues appropriately in the next UNDAF.

In so doing, the report is intended to feed into the mid-term review of the Zambia UNDAF 2007-2010. It makes suggestions for how best to use the time remaining in the current UNDAF to prepare for full inclusion of disability issues in the next Framework document.

It is important to restate here that the inclusion of disability in the UNDAF is not an end in itself. The purpose of including disability in the UN's development framework is to improve the lives and participation rates of Zambians with disabilities, on a basis of equality with others.

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## **2. The current situation in the UN System in Zambia in relation to disability inclusion**

### **2.1 The UNDAF**

A simple word search of the Zambia UNDAF 2007-2010 reveals that there is no reference to people with disabilities or disability issues. Furthermore, there is no evidence of a conceptual inclusion of disability issues, even in the broad category of “vulnerable groups”.

### **2.2 Other reviewed UN documentation**

The consultant reviewed a selection of programme and project documents supplied by UN agencies prior to, during or immediately after interviews in response to her request for typical documentation and materials. With a couple of exceptions (notably the DWCP, consultation procedures relating to HIV/AIDS, and some minor references in project guidelines supplied by a couple of other agencies) most of the documents supplied to the consultant also did not mention people with disabilities or disability issues. As with the UNDAF, there was little evidence of a conceptual inclusion, even in the term “vulnerable groups”. As previously noted, the supply of documents was not comprehensive, and it may be that some others relate to disability issues in some way. If so, respondents did not mention such documentation during consultation meetings.

Where people with disabilities or matters pertaining to disability were mentioned in documents, this was generally in relation to:

- a category on a list of “vulnerable groups”, usually in a footnote towards the end of the list, near to the “etc”
- rehabilitation and specific disability-specific medical services (for example, those supplied to refugees)
- social protection measures targeted specifically to people with disabilities
- disability-specific projects.

Aside from the examples cited above (for example, in the DWCP), disabled people do not feature as beneficiaries of mainstream programmes, or in relation to mainstream development goals. In consultation meetings, respondents said that in several cases in which people with disabilities or disability issues were mentioned as an element in a list of beneficiaries or “vulnerable groups” this focus was not carried through to implementation.

### **2.3 Consultation meetings with UN agencies**

The consultant held meetings with personnel representing 11 UN agencies based in Lusaka (see Annex 2, p. 16) for details. Respondents expressed genuine interest in and general support for the idea of making the UNDAF more relevant to people with disabilities and disability issues, and were open in their approach. The majority, however, had very little or, mostly, no, experience of disability issues or disability-related perspectives. Those who had some experience were aware that it was patchy and project-specific, and did not relate to a coherent policy, focus or approach. Most had apparently not heard of the CRPD and were unaware of its potential to inform or affect their agency’s work. There was almost no clear understanding of the relationship between disability and the Millennium Development Goals

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(MDGs), for example, and little recognition of the importance of including people with disabilities realistically in work to target interventions to “the most vulnerable”.

With the exception of specific ILO projects, no agency appeared to have related directly to Zambian Ministries on disability issues, although in January 2008, for the first time at its Annual Retreat, the UNCT invited a representative of a DPO (the Zambian Agency for Disabled People - ZADP) to participate in a panel discussion representing Zambian civil society organizations.

While generally keen to include disability-related perspectives as a way of reinforcing the UN’s rights-based approach, respondents expressed concerns about how this might be done. Concerns were wide-ranging, and included:

- the lack of statistical data means that there is no firm baseline from which to work, and no obvious way of setting targets
- feeling overwhelmed by the scale and scope of the experience of disability
- concerns about the weakness of Zambian DPOs and its implications for meaningful consultation.

All respondents requested sensitization training and capacity-building on disability issues and perspectives. Some felt that parts of this exercise could be done jointly with representatives of Zambian Ministries. Others thought that the UN System had disability-related issues to consider and resolve which were additional to their joint programmes. Another group thought that the UN System needed to be clear in itself before it began relating to Zambian Ministries on disability-related matters.

The problem focus associated by respondents with disability inclusion in the course of consultation meetings was interesting. As one respondent pointed out, the progressive realization of rights is an established principle, yet the idea of disability inclusion seems almost to overwhelm many people. This seems to be a function of the particular location of disability issues within a paradigm of tragedy and hopelessness, coupled with a sense of helplessness concerning scale and resolution. This is traditional in thinking about disability (see also p. 12). A shift in perspective to a realization of the experience of disability as being part of the normal range of humanity is germane to refocusing attention onto what can actually be achieved as an integral part of mainstream policy, programmes, projects and practices.

At the same time respondents felt that working on issues of disability inclusion would inject new and visible urgency into the UN’s rights-based approach in Zambia, and would also assist in ensuring better targeting of services and programmes to people experiencing a high degree of marginalization. Equally, it was felt that it would aid the move to joined-up thinking and collaborative working.

## 2.4 Summary

Disability does not feature in the current Zambia UNDAF, in any guise. There appears to be no coherent policy or practice concerning disability either within or between most UN agencies, and little or no discussion of disability-related issues with Zambian Ministries, apart from with the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) on specific topics, and, in a more general way, the Ministry for Labour and Social Security and its National Employment and Labour Market Policy. Most UN agencies have little or no expertise in the area. In theory at least, they are open to learning and inclusion.

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This stark reality offers an almost blank canvas on which to begin to make changes. It also makes it clear that there is little evidence of significant expertise or orientation on which to build. The quality of the future of disability inclusion in the UN System in Zambia depends on starting from the beginning and building basic expertise.

This is not necessarily a negative situation. It is far harder to unpick existing practice than to introduce new perspectives and ways of doing things. Success depends, however, on the rapid creation of practical commitment and buy-in.

### **Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP)**

As previously noted, the broad purpose of the Zambia UNDAF is to help to ensure the attainment of the Zambian Government's Fifth National Development Plan 2006-2010 (FNDP). The consultant therefore looked briefly at parts of the FNDP, to ascertain what focus, if any, it puts on disability issues.

A chapter of the FNDP is concerned with disability and development. Taking its cue from the definition of disability contained in the Zambian Persons with Disabilities Act, 1996 (currently under review), the chapter is rooted in the medical model of disability (see p. 17), and effectively defines the abilities of disabled people as lying outside "the range considered normal for a human being". The chapter notes that "the Act has not been enforced and that its violations are rarely recognised, due mainly to ignorance among the various stakeholders of what it entails". The chapter also notes that the (MCDSS) has produced a National Policy on Disability, but that "no implementation plan has been put in place to realise its objectives".

The chapter is broadly stated, and the goals it contains are aspirational and unlikely to be achieved in full in the foreseeable future. That being said, it is not without merit. It commits the Government of Zambia to putting in place "deliberate and effective interventions...to accelerate progress during the FNDP towards the attainment of the rights and needs of persons with disabilities". Methods of doing this are to include:

- increased Government spending on disability
- developing inclusive mainstream policies
- review of existing legislation
- establishment and/or strengthening of institutions and systems.

The consultant understands that work is taking place on some of these fronts, with some projects receiving support under the ILO/Irish Aid Partnership Programme. However, there appear to be few linkages between the disability chapter and those dealing with the mainstream of related areas (for example, social security, education). The consultant is unaware of the level of progress made on most of the 11 more detailed action areas included in the chapter (concerning, for example, support services, social security, and political and public life).

What is important, however, is that the relevance of disability to development is acknowledged in the FNDP. Given its inclusion here, and that the UNDAF postdates it, it is surprising that this focus is not carried through to the UNDAF itself. In consultation meetings respondents stressed the importance of Government requesting UN assistance. Most respondents were, however, unaware of the inclusion of disability as a development issue in the FNDP.

A significant GRZ action that took place at the beginning of 2008 concerns the designation of disability focal points in all GRZ Ministries. While this falls short of the related strategy advocated in the disability

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and development chapter of the FNDP, it is nevertheless a very positive move. Capacity-building of designated staff has begun, with some ILO assistance, and it is likely that MCDSS, the Ministry responsible for the success of this element of the Plan, will look to the UN System for more assistance and cooperation. This in turn can act as a catalyst for capacity-building in the UN agencies themselves (see p. 11).

### **3. Integrating appropriate consideration of disability issues into the Zambia UNDAF**

#### **3.1 Parameters**

Given the low level of confidence and expertise on disability inclusion currently in the UN System in Zambia, it would be foolhardy and unviable to “parachute” disability issues into the remainder of the current period of the UNDAF. Conversely, the mid-term review of the UNDAF offers the opportunity to put a mechanism in place to build capacity and expertise during the second half of the lifetime of the Framework. Towards the end of this period, it will then be possible to make informed decisions regarding the most productive way to include disability issues in the next Zambia UNDAF.

One of the weaknesses of the current situation is also, paradoxically, one of its strengths. Because the general level of disability-related expertise is so low, almost all UN agencies in Zambia are at the same level. This offers great opportunities for joint learning, synergy and cooperation. It also means that, while some agencies may have more initial enthusiasm for the process than others, the opportunity to hide behind the relative expertise of others is greatly reduced. The innovative nature of the project, and the opportunity to show leadership in the worldwide UN System, may also help to encourage cooperation and involvement, particularly in the context of the “UN Delivering as One” in Zambia.

#### **3.2 What needs to be done**

The most effective way to include disability issues in the Zambia UNDAF, or in development work in general, involves a strategy and trajectory inspired by that taken in relation to HIV/AIDS and the UNAIDS team working in Zambia. Over recent years the perception of HIV/AIDS has shifted from a primarily medical focus to a social focus, and from an issue that had relevance only to a certain number of specialists, to being every UN agency’s issue. Joint learning strategies involving all staff, the emergence of a global understanding of the effects and relevance of HIV/AIDS for all development work, the inclusion of HIV/AIDS related content in all programmes and projects – all these have their equivalents in an understanding of the relationship between disability and development.

The success of the UN System’s approach to HIV/AIDS has been fuelled by its acceptance as a global priority, and the subsequent availability of resources of all kinds. It remains to be seen whether the global UN System will view disability inclusion with the same urgency. The methodology outlined below is not predicated on this possibility, at least in the short term. However, the UN System in Zambia could use its leadership position on this issue to argue for resources and support as a demonstration project, and thus to be able to influence the international disability rights agenda in the UN globally.

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### 3.2.1 *The basics of disability inclusion*

The process of deciding how best to include disability issues in the Zambia UNDAF, and in the work of UN agencies in Zambia, will take some time to complete. Some aspects will be technical in nature. Others will require changes to existing programmes: for example, if improving the nutrition of young children is predicated on a school-based feeding programme, and children with disabilities are not attending school, what is the best way of ensuring their access to decent food? Some will involve small adjustments, while others will involve research or the provision of technical expertise.

Without prejudice to the extent of the above considerations, there are some basic requirements which can be factored in from the start. These include the need to supply:

- accessibility to buildings, including those hired for events such as workshops
- accessibility of printed, verbal and electronic information, including websites
- checklists, for example for event management
- disability equality training (see below) geared appropriately to the needs of staff:
  - whose work brings them into direct contact with disabled people
  - who make decisions which affect the lives of people with disabilities
  - who design and/or deliver programmes and projects which affect the lives of people with disabilities.

As with the UN's approach to HIV/AIDS, all staff need to have a broad understanding of disability issues. Similarly, although it lies outside the scope of the UNDAF, it is also important to consider human resources (HR) policy and practice as it affects people with disabilities throughout the UN System in Zambia.

Disability-related expertise is as relevant to UN agencies' strategies, priorities and specific work plans as it is to joint activities and programmes.

### 3.2.2 *The basics of preparatory work*

The main elements of preparatory work are:

- disability equality training and capacity building
- examining existing practice
- action planning
- pilot activities
- identifying good practice and preparing appropriate guidance.

The exchange of information with countries and organizations which are perceived to be more advanced in the field of disability inclusion would also be of benefit. There is also good potential for linkages with cooperating partners, international NGOs and DPOs.

The above activities will provide both knowledge and practical experience in order to:

- build competence and confidence
- deal with possible barriers to the inclusion of disability-related goals in the UNDAF (see p. 12).

By starting small, and pursuing both practical and conceptual goals, it is possible to take logical steps towards the larger goal of disability mainstreaming throughout the UN System.

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### 3.2.3 *Disability equality training*

The most urgent and basic need is to provide a grounding in disability equality and the rights-based approach to disability inclusion throughout the UN agencies in Zambia, at both strategic and operational levels. It may be possible to adapt a disability equality training (DET) programme piloted earlier this year at the International Training Centre of the ILO in Italy, attended by personnel drawn from several UN agencies. In the context of the Zambia UNDAF, DET should be angled to build capacity among participants, and should include a substantial element of action planning.

DET and other activities could be undertaken over 2-3 days:

- by individual agencies
- in a cross-agency structure

depending on local circumstances.

To ensure effectiveness over time, it is important that staff at both strategic and operational levels are involved. The experience of the pilot project in Italy earlier this year suggests that cross-fertilization across agencies is motivating and helpful, especially at an early stage or when dealing with basic ideas and concepts. It is also vital that DET leads participants to recognize the implications of disability inclusion for their actual job, and how that fits with what others are doing.

### 3.2.4 *Examining current and planned programmes and activities*

Once they have a basic grounding in disability related issues, the agencies themselves – supported by appropriate disability-related expertise as required – should examine their current and planned programmes, projects and other activities, in order to assess their impact on people with disabilities. It is important that this work, often called “disability audits”, is carried out primarily by the agencies themselves, as they are the experts in their own field. Leaving disability auditing to disability experts alone results in a reduction of ownership on the part of the agencies, and also risks the adoption of strategies and solutions which are not fit for the agencies’ purpose.

### 3.2.5 *Piloting*

Each participating agency should identify one or more small-scale pilot activities through which it can test out and apply its disability-related expertise, using external support as appropriate. Pilot activities should be time-limited and clearly focused, and could be paper-based and conceptual, or practical and empirical. They need not involve new or extra projects. Activities which focus on including disability-related perspectives into existing actions would be particularly useful, as would joint activities across agencies. At the end of the pilot period the agencies should meet together to share learning and to apply their experience to planning for the next UNDAF.

### 3.2.6 *Accessing and developing good-practice guidance*

The process of mainstreaming disability into the work of the UN System in Zambia can be informed by accessing existing good-practice guidance produced by disability inclusion initiatives both within the UN (for example, the ILO’s work with women entrepreneurs with disabilities in Zambia and elsewhere) and outside it (for example, aspects of Voluntary

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Service Overseas' work on mainstreaming disability into development activity). It may be possible to adapt such guidance to local circumstances. UN-related sources, such as the *Handbook for Parliamentarians on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UN, Geneva, 2007), will be of particular value. Specialist NGOs working in Zambia, such as Action on Disability and Development, may also be able to assist.

### 3.2.7 *Dealing with resistance*

As previously noted, disability inclusion is perceived as problematic in a way that appears to exceed that of other equality issues. Barriers to the inclusion of disability in the UNDAF in any meaningful way are likely to revolve around the following issues:

- concerns about relevance, complexity, scale and/or cost of disability inclusion
- concerns about how to collect and disaggregate data on people with disabilities within a rights-based system, in order to be able to target, monitor and evaluate initiatives and activities
- lack of clear ownership or leadership on the issue from within the UN System in Zambia (or, perhaps, regionally)
- perceived lack of resources (financial, knowledge, or time)
- sense of additional burden
- concerns about consultation with and involvement of disabled people.

DET, action planning and pilot activities can provide practical opportunities to deal with most of these fears and concerns. Others will require further consideration and research. Drawing on the lessons learned through the parallel experience of inclusion as it relates to HIV/AIDS and/or gender will be of great benefit. The traditional view of disability emphasises separateness and difference; by understanding disability as a natural part of normal human diversity it is possible to adapt and apply rights-based approaches developed for other kinds of exclusion or marginalization to the disability agenda. Detailed understanding of the causes and typology of disability is far less important for inclusion than understanding and applying a limited range of key basic concepts to agencies' core activities and expertise.

As previously noted, for reasons of sustainability, embedding and ownership it is important that all learning and pilot activities are geared to developing in-house expertise, with access to external expertise and resources as needed. From this base it will be possible to decide if inclusive programmes will be sufficient, or whether they will need to be supplemented, in the short or medium term, at any rate, with programmes and projects targeted specifically at people with disabilities, in order to equalise opportunities for participation and benefit. There will also be the opportunity to bridge the gap between existing policy and practice and the development of new policy and programmes which have disability inclusion inbuilt from the start.

It is possible that not all UN agencies present in Zambia will agree in the first instance to participate in the process of creating disability inclusion. While unanimity would clearly be preferable, this situation should not hold others back, especially as their involvement may have a useful "demonstration effect".

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### 3.2.8 *Locating leadership and ownership*

The UN Country Team (UNCT) showed leadership not just locally, but also globally, when it decided to conduct the present disability audit of the UNDAF. The continuation and strengthening of this leadership is an essential component for the effective inclusion of disability into the Zambia UNDAF.

The UNCT should retain overall responsibility for the process of working towards disability inclusion in the Zambia UNDAF, championed by those Heads of Agency who recognize that they are ready to dedicate personnel, time and a capsule budget to the preparatory exercise. (Raising funds specifically for the process of working towards disability inclusion in the UNDAF could be a part of the programme.)

The UNCT may find it appropriate to vest responsibility for the practicalities in a focussed taskforce comprising two or more agencies, to act as both driver and exemplar. As in the approach taken in relation to HIV/AIDS, this would allow for different agencies taking a lead on particular issues and topics.

The taskforce should develop a methodology and timetable for building disability-related expertise in the UN System in Zambia, along the lines detailed above, with a view to:

- full inclusion of disability issues in the next Zambia UNDAF
- establishment of a single disability-related consultation structure for the UN System in Zambia
- greater involvement with GRZ in the achievement of disability-related targets in the FNDP and subsequent NDPs
- inclusion of competencies and goals related to disability issues in staff performance assessment frameworks, indicators and monitoring and evaluation frameworks within the timeframe set by the deadline for finalizing the next Zambia UNDAF.

Whether the interests of people with disabilities would be better served by the inclusion of disability in the UNDAF as:

- an additional area of cooperation
- an additional cross-cutting area

should be decided in the course of preparatory work. In consultation meetings some respondents noted that gender, currently a cross-cutting area, remains a marginalised issue. They felt that cross-cutting issues can easily be put aside, and that ensure tangible results disability inclusion needs to be an additional area of cooperation. Simply naming an issue, unaccompanied by an agreed programme, was felt to lead to a shallow “tick-box” mentality. Respondents urged the need for a comprehensive and systematic joint programme with good visibility and in-built accountability.

The plan for preparing the UN System in Zambia for full disability inclusion should be announced by the UNCT at a relevant event, such as an event to present the mid-term review of the UNDAF, if this is planned. Alternatively, announcing this intention and commitment would fit well with this year’s theme for the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2008: “The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Dignity and Justice for All of Us”. This would also follow on from the 2007 event, on the theme of Decent Work for Disabled People, which was attended by the Vice-President of Zambia and the ILO Director, representing the UN System. In any event, the

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timing of the announcement should allow for focussed work to begin at the start of 2009, to be continued over a defined two-year period.

## **4. Conclusion**

The UN System in Zambia has shown remarkable leadership in deciding to undertake a disability audit of its current UNDAF. This exercise has revealed the need to build capacity, knowledge and confidence among staff at all levels, in order to ensure the meaningful inclusion of disability issues, as either an additional area of cooperation or as an additional cross-cutting issue (as deemed most useful) in the next UNDAF.

The kind of leadership and coordination approach taken in relation to HIV/AIDS would be the most effective methodology to use for this purpose. If resources do not allow for this, a focussed taskforce comprising two or more willing UN agencies, should be tasked to design and spearhead a programme of capacity-building and pilot initiatives. The taskforce should be set up as soon as possible, involving staff representing both strategic and operational interests. Its initial outcome should be to prepare a plan to take the UN System in Zambia towards the full inclusion of disability-related matters in the next UNDAF. As a sign of the UN System's commitment, the plan should be made public on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2008.

In undertaking this work the UN System in Zambia will be demonstrating the seriousness of its intent to fulfil the requirements of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and to ensure the full participation of Zambians with disabilities in the development of their country, on a basis of equality with everyone else.

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## Annexes

### Annex 1: Extracts from terms of reference

#### Disability Audit of the Zambia UNDAF

In particular, the assignment includes:

1. Reviewing the UNDAF document and related work plans and other relevant documentation to assess:
  - i. strategies on monitoring and strengthening the evidence on the situation of disabled people in Zambia
  - ii. methods of increasing awareness of the rights and entitlements of disabled people
  - iii. methods of sensitizing policy-makers and advocating for legal and policy changes
  - iv. methods of challenging prejudice and increasing access to public services
  - v. strategies of supporting disabled people to access jobs, credit and income generating activities
  - vi. methods of addressing inequalities between disabled and non-disabled people in all strategic areas of the UNDAF's work in promoting disability equality.
  - vii. strategies of engaging Government Departments and Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs).
2. Drawing attention to disability concerns and identifying areas that may be strengthened/revised to further address disability issues.
3. Reviewing country strategic plans for individual agencies participating in the exercise to assess the adequacy and appropriateness of their attention to disability concerns and to identify areas that may be strengthened revised to further address disability issues.
4. Holding consultations with focal persons in participating individual agencies to get an overview of disability related activities and programmes in place.
5. Consulting with the UNDAF outcome group/s to assess to what extent the UNDAF can mainstream disability issues with regards to the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) and identify possible areas for joint work.
6. Compiling a draft report of the audit, to be submitted to the participating agencies (through the ILO) for comments.
7. Finalizing the report based on comments received.

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## **Annex 2: Agencies consulted**

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Office of the Resident Coordinator (RCO)
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- World Food Programme (WFP)

The World Bank sent a brief written response.

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## Annex 3: The implications of the move to a rights-based model of disability

The CRPD (see Annex 4, p. 6) institutionalizes the **rights-based model of disability** (also known as the social model of disability). This asserts that people with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else, and must have equality of participation in mainstream activities. The rights-based model requires Governments and service providers to remove or alter the perspectives, strategies, policies, systems, processes, procedures and practices which prevent people with disabilities from taking part fully in everything that goes on in a society, on a basis of equality with others. This is a big job, as most people with disabilities around the world currently have poor access to education, infrastructure, decent work, training, health and social supports, transport, shelter, cultural life and much more, and this holds back their development in ways which are both obvious and subtle. For example, a small-scale farmer with a mobility impairment may have to pay someone to do certain tasks, reducing the farm's disposable income, or may have to use a substantial amount of time to do it himself, tiring him and reducing his capacity to get the best from his land.

The rights-based model of disability also means that much more effort must be put into ensuring that people with disabilities are empowered to participate effectively in decision-making and planning about issues that concern them. The international disability rights slogan, **“nothing about us without us”** sums this up well.

Similarly, the rights-based model requires Governments, UN agencies and others to consider the impact on people with disabilities of the policies, programmes, projects and activities that they fund, run and advocate. Are people with disabilities able to benefit from whatever is going on? Are their needs and participation considered when programmes, projects and activities are planned and delivered?

Clearly, the worldwide shift to the rights-based model of disability will have profound consequences. Until now, thinking about disability often centred on the **medical model of disability**. This view sees people with disabilities primarily in medical terms. It holds that the exclusion that most people with disabilities experience is a direct result of their impairments, and that society should try to cure disabled people or care for them. According to this way of thinking, it's not up to society to change so that people with disabilities can join in. Integration is seen as something that people with disabilities can achieve if they can be cured, or “become normal”, or if they themselves make huge efforts to “overcome” the disadvantages they face.

Using the medical model, effort to benefit people with disabilities has concentrated primarily on the provision of basic social services and, in particular, on the supply of medical rehabilitation services. People with disabilities need these services, and much good has been done. But, on their own, services like these are insufficient to eliminate societal barriers and shortcomings in inclusive service delivery. People with disabilities have not been named as a beneficiary group in mainstream services. Also, because the medical model essentially sees people with disabilities as “patients”, their views have often not been canvassed or taken into account, and not enough has been done to empower them. Non-disabled professionals have assumed responsibility for making the decisions that affect or control disabled people's lives. The cycle of exclusion has not been challenged.

The arrival of the CRPD changes all this.

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## **Annex 4: An introduction to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) came into force in May 2008. The first UN Convention of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it contains no new rights. Instead, it complements existing international human rights treaties by clarifying States' obligations and legal duties to respect and ensure the equal enjoyment of all human rights by people with disabilities. Ratifying States are expected to:

- make the changes necessary to enable people with disabilities to exercise their rights
- reinforce protection for disabled people where their rights have been violated.

The CRPD also names universal minimum standards that should apply to everyone, and which provide the basis for a coherent framework for action. Under the terms of the Convention, ratifying States also agree to consult with people with disabilities, through their representative organizations, when developing and implementing laws and policies which put the Convention into practice, or which affect disabled people's lives.

The Convention marks a very significant change on attitudes and approaches to people with disabilities. Disabled people are no longer to be viewed as "objects" of charity, medical rehabilitation and social protection (see also Annex 3). Instead, disabled people are seen as "subjects" with rights, capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on free and active consent. The Convention names their rightful place as active members of society, and gives universal recognition to their dignity.

The CRPD principles are:

- Respect for inherent dignity, autonomy, independence, freedom to make your own decisions
- Non-discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Acceptance of people with disabilities as part of human diversity, and respect for the diversity of people with disabilities
- Equality of opportunity
- Accessibility (to the environment, and also to services – to whatever is going on)
- Equality between men and women
- Respect for the evolving capabilities of children with disabilities and for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identity.

The explicit rights set out in the Convention are:

- Equality before the law without discrimination
- Right to life, liberty and security of the person
- Equal recognition before the law, and legal capacity
- Freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse
- Right to respect for physical and mental integrity
- Freedom of movement and nationality
- Right to live in the community (and to live independently)
- Freedom of expression and opinion, access to information

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- Respect for privacy
  - Respect for home and the family
  - Right to education
  - Right to health
  - Right to work
  - Right to an adequate standard of living
  - Right to participate in political and public life
  - Right to participate in cultural life, leisure, recreation, sport.

The CRPD also has provisions relating to:

- raising awareness, so that people with disabilities and non-disabled people understand their rights and responsibilities
- accessibility
- situations of risk and humanitarian emergency – these can bring about disability, and also in these situations people with disabilities are often more vulnerable than others
- access to justice, so that people with disabilities can claim their rights
- personal mobility
- habilitation and rehabilitation
- statistics and data collection.

The CRPD makes the inclusion of people with disabilities and the mainstreaming of disability issues essential in all development activities. Article 32 requires States Parties, between and among themselves and “as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society” to take appropriate and effective measures in the field of international cooperation which supports national efforts “for the realization of the purpose and objectives” of the Convention. Included among suggested measures is a clause aimed at “ensuring that international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities”. Another clause concerns “facilitating and supporting capacity building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices”.

The full text of the CRPD is available on <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/disabilities-convention.htm>. A plain language version is available at <http://tinyurl.com/360fsl>.