

Forum: General Assembly Third Committee

Issue: Inclusive development for people with disabilities

Student Officer: Pilar Busquets

Position: Deputy Chair

Introduction

Of the world's population, according to World Health Organization (WHO), 15% can be categorized as people living with some kind of disability. This percentage has been rising progressively since 1970's, when it was around 10%, due to the ageing population and epidemic spread of chronic disease.

This wide population was naively excluded from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), hence not being included in the United Nations funding programs. This situation was highly detrimental for this vulnerable sector of society because of the costly infrastructure, education they demand due to their different capabilities. Still, the 2030 agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) vividly encourages the inclusive development of People with Disabilities (PWD) specifically targeting this group in matters of Human Rights (paragraph 19), education (paragraph 25) and employment (goal 4.5). This paved the way for the improvement of their lives through the securing of jobs, the improvement of infrastructure and transport (goal 11.2) and their insertion in education, all of which aim at the inclusion of PWD in society and allowing their development within.

PWDs are unfairly distributed through the world, being more concentrated in developing countries where the less opportunities for development are available. Due to the high unemployment, poor health status and lower education levels this particular group tends to belong to the lowest socioeconomic group, hence being a barrier for their mutual development. A direct correlation between disability and poverty can be established, which thoroughly jeopardizes and decelerates PWD's development. Poverty at the same time, increases the severeness of disabilities, through malnutrition leading to poorer health conditions, hazardous working conditions and poor sanitation.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), has been ratified by 177 up to date (January 2019), hinting at the international awareness and recognition of the vulnerability and need for development of the PWD.

Definition of Key Terms

People with Disabilities (PWDs)

“Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. ” (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - Article 1 - 16 January 2019). Note that the subject “persons/people” is named before their condition, ‘to affirm and define the person first, before the impairment or disability’ (Al Ju’beh, 2015, p. 25).

Inclusive development

This term alludes to sustainable or inclusive growth, regarding the social, ecological and political extent of development. It tackles a global development, equal for every individual, which can be sustained through time. As the SDG number 8 declares “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. The inclusive development of PWDs corresponds to the social dimension named above.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

This convention is a document adopted by the United Nations on 13 December 2006 which, together with its optional protocol, shifted the social role of disabled people by regarding them as independent and active contributors to society who are entitled to their human rights of free will, rather than the concept of mere objects of charity.

Vulnerability

This term is used to describe the unprivileged situation of one individual in a particular circumstance. The disability community prefers to adapt the term “at risk” rather than the ladder, still this is the one used repetitively in the Sustainable Development of Goals and Targets.

Disabled persons’ organizations (DPOs)

Organizations that represent or are conformed by PWDs¹, whose main aim is to empower this segment of society by allowing their entry to the labour market while assuring

¹ International Disability Alliance. (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2018 from: <http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/>

their rights are being met, improving their independence in their participation in society, and being recognised not only for their disability. Example: International Disability Alliance (IDA).

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Sweden

This particular country has a particularly advanced political protections towards PWD's which further ensures its inclusion in society. Its social program mainly tackles the issues of transportation by adapting public means of transport such as bus and trams to fit everyone's needs with the Disability and Public Transportation act², of labour insertion by giving incentives to the employers (subsiding wages) and giving out grants to ensure housing or car allowances for mobility.

This is also coupled by a deep modification of the legislatures, which protect and include PWD in swedish society. One clear example is The Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (LSS) passed in 1994, which favoured PWD independence, equal living conditions and social inclusion.

France

Almost 12 million of people in France posses a type of disability. Hence, in 2018's 5 year program and budget³, the inclusive development of PWD was one of the major focuses. It targets to improve physical and digital accessibility of public services, reinforce the complying of their human rights, support their engagement in education and culture amongst others. This type of governmental involvement in PWD's affairs is crucial for the future attainment of their inclusion in global development.

Netherlands

The Netherland's disability policy includes incredibly generous pensions for both the long-term and short-term disabled. Despite the 2005 call made by the United Nations on the lack of statistical data on the amount and situation of PWD within the country, its highly effective budgeting and pension programmes cannot be unregarded and should be used as a model for the member state's disability policy.

² Sweden's disability policy. (2018, January 11). Retrieved from <https://sweden.se/society/swedens-disability-policy/>

³ Disability: A priority for the five-year term. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.gouvernement.fr/en/disability-a-priority-for-the-five-year-term>

International Disability Alliance (IDA)

This particular organization, apart for its major field work in a wide variety of countries on the defending of PWD rights and living conditions, deals with the empowering of others DPO's by providing resources, and focusing their advocacy both in local or even global level. Together with the International Disability and Development Consortium, it managed to developed a simplified document on how the 2030 UN agenda relates with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in order to make its content more reachable both to the general public and people who desire to take action on any of the points described by developing its own DPO.

Background Information

History before Human Rights

Through history, it has been proven that PWDs have receive differentiated treatments to other people who do not have different characteristics. In the ancient Greece they were killed or abandoned in the forest as soon as they were born. In the Roman empire, they were kept as an amusement for the nobility. A more recent example of the 20th century during World War II are the atrocities committed by the Nazi party during its rule, when they were alienated from society and then murdered. The above mentioned examples of inhumane treatment of Persons with Disabilities together with the constant segregation of PWDs from society brought about a stigma over their role in society, stating a clear differentiation between a human being and a PWD.

Civil Rights movement

After the Second World War, the Universal Human Rights and tied with it an exponentially more favorable circumstances for the inclusion of PWD in society's development. All the civil rights displayed in this period allowed a shift of perspective to occur within society over disabilities, not being anchors for development but just limitations which not define an individual's possibility to succeed. The new legislations granted PWDs accessibility to education, social integration.

Poverty and disability

It is important to state that disability does not directly imply poverty⁴, since there are various cases of PWD who indulge of a loving family, education and successful laboral life. Still, a statistical correlation has been found directly linking PWDs and poverty, derived from physical, attitudinal and institutional restraints. According to “Disability, poverty and development. London: DFID”, the two previously mentioned factors ‘reinforce each other, contributing to increased vulnerability and exclusion’.

Both poverty can lead to disability, and disability lead to poverty and together they engage in a vicious cycle which denies the individuals immersed in it to develop thoroughly. Individuals with disabilities, apart from the higher day-to-day expenses that usually require to live their life fully, face immense discrimination and segregation from society which leads to lower qualifications hence being more unlikely be employed. Individuals in poverty situations are more likely to face health problems due to lack of sanitation, malnutrition and low access to health care systems.

Violence

Statistical data from various sources point out at the vulnerability of PWD regarding aggression and their greater risk of being subjects to violence. Most of the cases being of sexual abuse mainly towards those suffering intellectual disabilities. This has damaging repercussion in both the short and long term on the victims life, provoking psychological aftermath, local injuries or even, in the most unfortunate of outcomes, death.

Participation in society

PWD’s are in a huge disadvantage in the job market powered not only by possible physical barriers regarding movement but also by much complex ones, such as their social isolation, the stigma or misinformation about their capabilities and labour harassment by other co-workers, among others.

⁴ Disability Inclusion. (n.d) Retrieved 15 January from:
<http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/DisabilityInclusion.pdf>

Table 8.1. Employment rates and ratios in selected countries

Country	Year	Employment rate of people with disabilities (%)	Employment rate of overall population (%)	Employment ratio
Australia ^a	2003	41.9	72.1	0.58
Austria ^a	2003	43.4	68.1	0.64
Canada ^a	2003	56.3	74.9	0.75
Germany ^a	2003	46.1	64.8	0.71
India ^b	2002	37.6	62.5	0.61
Japan ^a	2003	22.7	59.4	0.38
Malawi ^f	2003	42.3	46.2	0.92
Mexico ^a	2003	47.2	60.1	0.79
Netherlands ^a	2003	39.9	61.9	0.64
Norway ^a	2003	61.7	81.4	0.76
Peru ^c	2003	23.8	64.1	0.37
Poland ^a	2003	20.8	63.9	0.33
South Africa ^d	2006	12.4	41.1	0.30
Spain ^a	2003	22.1	50.5	0.44
Switzerland ^a	2003	62.2	76.6	0.81
United Kingdom ^a	2003	38.9	68.6	0.57
USA ^e	2005	38.1	73.2	0.52
Zambia ^g	2005	45.5	56.5	0.81

5

Although it has been argued that PWD's have a low rate of productivity, they are keen on loyalty, can definitely develop lots of skills, and are usually characterized by their low absenteeism. Nevertheless, the low levels of education or skill-learning amidst the PWD's is low, therefore their desirability as employees decline as these traits are the most valued by employers.

Furthermore, their lack of social inclusion also serves as a disadvantage, considering they lose the opportunity to establish social networks which later make the entrance to the job market easier. Moreover, discrimination both social and legislative has proven to be an obstacle for the immersion of PWDs in the job market.

Education

As declared in the WHO & World Bank, 2011, p. 206 report has shown, nearly half of children with disabilities never receive a formal education or are far more likely to drop out. This effect is merely a consequence of what has been described before, since lack of infrastructure for transportation, social segregation and low economic sources lead to the impairment of equality true equality regarding the academic instruction of disabled and non-disabled people. This disadvantageous position regarding academic achievements resulting in higher levels of illiteracy, has been proved to be tightly linked to lower economic status, contributing to their unjust marginalization from society.

⁵ World Report on Disability (Rep.). (n.d.). Unicef. Page 238. Retrieved February 11, 2019, from https://www.unicef.org/spanish/protection/World_report_on_disability_eng.pdf.

Accessibility

PWD's face the major drawback of lack or insufficient infrastructure regarding public transport facilities. Some attempts to solve this specific issue have been carried on, still their effectivity is minor due to several factors. The modifications that had been developed regarding this matter have been partial, specifically in developing countries, is "the lack of continuity of the travel chain"⁶, this being the fact that some parts of the transportation experience have been modified but others have not. For example, a newly upgraded bus is functioning but there is no ramped access to the station where to take the bus from. It is usual to perceive these inclusive upgrades concentrate on centric stations and some vehicles from the public transport fleet but mostly it is not a universal modification in the transporting experience. The deficiency of mass communication regarding timetables and PWD's-friendly transport is also a drawback that necessarily has to be addressed.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1500s	In medieval historiographic records the so called "lunatics" together with other types of disabled people were portrayed as unable, crazy and unfit.
1716	The percentage of PWD in society lower class increases due to the worsening of rural hardship.
1755	Samuel Heinicke established the first oral school for deaf children in Germany.
1760	Thomas Braidwood opened the first school for deaf children in England
1829	Braille Invents the Raised Point Alphabet 15 year old Louis Braille develops his new alphabet for blind people. He managed to find 63 arrangements for a six dot cell. Louis' close friend Gabriel Gauthier became the first person ever to read Braille.
1860	Down's Syndrome recognized by Dr Langdon Down.

⁶ World Report on Disability (Rep.). (n.d.). Unicef. Retrieved February 11, 2019, from https://www.unicef.org/spanish/protection/World_report_on_disability_eng.pdf.

- 1861 The American Civil War caused a major part of male society to suffer from injuries which lead to a exponential rising of the physical impaired in society. During the war there were 30,000 amputations in the side of the Union Army.
- 1868 Royal National Institute for the Blind was created. The first wheelchair model was patented in the US.
- 1918 Funding for Rehabilitation
The immense number of disabled ex-American soldiers of the WWI (First World War), forced the US government to pass a massive rehabilitation program for its war veterans.
- 1935 In the US the Social Security Act was signed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signs the Social Security Act, establishing a program of permanent assistance to adults with disabilities.
- 1939 Nazi Program Kills Thousands of PWD
In the beginning of World War II under Adolf Hitler's orders a massive "mercy killing" of the sick and disabled is carried on. The Nazi euthanasia program is established to vanish "life unworthy of life." Around 75,000 to 250,000 people with various types of disabilities killed between 1939 and 1941.
- 1945 The term 'idiot' is replaced by 'severely subnormal' in legal.
- 1981 The UN proclaimed the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP).
- 1982 On December 3rd the UN General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons (WPA), a global approach to raise awareness on prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities of people with disabilities.
- 1983 The International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, which focused on rehabilitation and employment. This Convention tried to achieve equality between every type of worker, regardless of their condition.

1988	Starts of Telethon
May 27th	1st 'Block Telethon' at studios of London Weekend Television.
2004	First Disability Pride Parade in Chicago.
2006	The UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Report on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 25 April 2001, **(A/56/263)**
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 13 December 2006, **(A/RES/61/106)**
- Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond, 18 December 2014, **(A/RES/69/142)**
- Towards the full realization of an inclusive and accessible United Nations for persons with disabilities, 17 December 2015, **(A/RES/70/170)**
- Inclusive development for persons with disabilities, 2 October 2018, **(A/73/211/Rev.1)**
- Report of the Secretary-General on Inclusive Development for Persons with disabilities **(A/73/211/Rev.1)**

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

In the year 2006, a major breakthrough in the inclusive development of people with disabilities carried out by the United Nation with the adoption of The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. Its implementation marked a turning point in this matter awareness for all member states, as well as highlighting their need for independence, respect, non discrimination, participation and inclusion in society, equality of opportunities and accessibility. Its Optional Protocol, despite not being signed by as many member states as the Convention itself, was also a huge innovation regarding the communication of the situation of PWD, since they were given a voice to complain for their rights.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has worked specifically in the inclusive development of PWD regarding the area of employment, since their vulnerability has been highlighted several times. It was recognized that female persons with disabilities is the group with higher vulnerability at the moment of entering the labour market. An international policy

was drawn, in which they propose that PWD should be included in the National Employment Policies (NEP) of each country. It encourages countries to include the participation of PWD in the mere planning of the NEP, by first analysing what are the barriers which prevent them to be included and thus finding solutions to work them out. This actions encouraged several states, such as Sri Lanka, Vietnam⁷, Thailand and Ethiopia to include PWD in their NEP.

Possible Solutions

As the SDGs have drawn, coupled with the involvement of persons with disabilities in society, a clear change of mindset regarding the group at hand has to occur in the perspectives of other integrants of society. The raising of awareness of PWD to the general public through propaganda would lower their misconceptions, prejudice and ignorance ,thus, promoting respect and making easier their inclusion to labour and social environments. Hence, this would allow a more thorough integration of Persons with Disabilities in society, which will hopefully later derive in their inclusion in development.

Still, the fact that physical or mental impairment can jeopardize their inclusion if unregarded, should encourage member states to assure education, transport, medical insurance, employment, together with other factors previously tackled. This can be achieved through the passing of inclusive laws encompassing abovementioned needs, which would be with great difficulty met or even unmet otherwise. It is clear that different solutions have to be drawn depending on the context of the country in which the issue is being tackled, since funding or other resources may be limited for some member states.

The availability of public rehabilitation is a matter of great concern, taking into account the high costs which would entail to an individual, which would be already framed on a disadvantageous laboral position. It is crucial for governments to carry out a periodical monitoring of these services, if offered, to evaluate their effectivity and quality. Furthermore, by conducting research on the local PWD needs, funds can be used more effectively thus, benefiting the most vulnerable sector of population.

Regarding the laborious entrance to the job market PWD face, government legislatures such as anti-discrimination laws, hiring quotas and incentives for the employers could be applied. These would not only guarantee PWD a position in the labour community, but also would encourage employers to participate in their inclusion.

Education is a human right, thus, everyone should be entitled to it. PWD are no excuse to any human right, therefore, it is part of the member states responsibility to ensure

⁷ Moving Towards Disability Inclusion (Rep.). (n.d.). Retrieved February 12, 2019, from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_161531.pdf.

their participation and permanence in the academic environment. Developing national policies of inclusion of children with disabilities in public education instead of building special schools which isolate them as well as ensuring inclusive educational infrastructure are ways of improving PWD's educational involvement.

Bibliography

Call for submissions on inclusive development for persons with disabilities and the realisation of their human rights Enable. (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2018 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/idpd2016-crpd10-anniversary.html>

Disability Inclusion Overview. (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2018 from : [:https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability](https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability)

Disability: A priority for the five-year term. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.gouvernement.fr/en/disability-a-priority-for-the-five-year-term>

Disability Inclusion. (n.d) Retrieved 15 January from: <http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/DisabilityInclusion.pdf>

Disability inclusive development. (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2018 from: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/democratic-governance-and-peacebuilding/rule-of-law--justice--security-and-human-rights/disability-inclusive-development.html>

Disabled World. (2012, June 28). Definitions of Disability. Retrieved December 15, 2018 from: <https://www.disabled-world.com/definitions/disability-definitions.php>

EU. (n.d.). DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (Rep.). Retrieved December 15, 2018, from: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/guidance-note-disability-2012_en.pdf.

International Disability Alliance. (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2018 from: <http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/>

Inclusion of people with disabilities in national employment policies (Rep.). (n.d.). International Labour Organization. Retrieved from

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_407646.pdf.

Moving Towards Disability Inclusion (Rep.). (n.d.). Retrieved February 12, 2019, from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_161531.pdf.

Sweden's disability policy. (2018, January 11). Retrieved from <https://sweden.se/society/swedens-disability-policy/>

The 2030 Agenda THE INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES; COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE (Rep.). (n.d.). International Disability Alliance. Retrieved February 13, 2019, from https://iddconsortium.net/sites/default/files/resources-tools/files/2030_agenda_comprehensive_guide_for_persons_with_disabilities.pdf.

UN Partnership to promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Donor Trust Fund (UNPRPD MDTF). (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2018 from: <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/RPD00>

What is a DPO? – Disability Rights Fund. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://disabilityrightsfund.org/faq/what-is-a-dpo/>

World Report on Disability (Rep.). (n.d.). Unicef. Retrieved February 11, 2019, from https://www.unicef.org/spanish/protection/World_report_on_disability_eng.pdf.

World report on disability. (2018, October 16). Retrieved December 15, 2018 from: https://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report/en/