

November 2009

POLICY PAPER

Accessibility

Indonésie, Banda Aceh © Inclusion team / Handicap International



How to design
and promote an environment
accessible to all?

**HANDICAP
INTERNATIONAL**

November 2009

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“Reducing and removing the physical obstacles and obstacles to understanding information which people in disabling situations find in their way every single day is key to ensuring their autonomy. It is one of the necessary conditions which must be met in order to create a facilitating and more inclusive environment, but it cannot in itself ensure genuine inclusion. For example, it is extremely important that schools are made accessible. However, making the school accessible does not make it fully inclusive as this requires teacher training, and awareness-raising amongst parents etc.”

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The policy paper: A guide for Handicap International's programs

In 2008 the Handicap International Board of Directors asked the Technical Resources Division to prepare a policy paper for each of the major themes dealt with by the association, in order to reinforce its scientific credibility.

These policy papers are intended to set out Handicap International's mandate and values in operational terms applicable to each major area in which the association works. This is a working guide which sets out the points of reference for our interventions, our decisions and our positions. It aims to ensure coherence in terms of practices on different programs, whilst taking into account differing circumstances and contexts. It explains in concrete terms what Handicap International does, can do, does not do and cannot do.

All projects and activities implemented by the programs should conform to the guidelines presented in these policy papers.

Handicap International first began to reflect on the theme of accessibility in 2003. Since this time thinking on the subject has come a long way. This thematic policy paper, validated by the Technical Resources Division at the start of 2009, is the result of this lengthy process.

It has been drawn up in several stages:

- ▶ *In 2003 and 2004 an initial research phase was launched, looking at the literature on the theme and at various experiences in the field. The project "Is Salvador a Disabled City?" launched in 1997 by the Brazilian NGO Vida Brazil with support from Handicap International was highlighted as a key project on the theme of accessibility in architecture and area planning. Over the years, Vida Brasil were able to develop a series of actions to promote and improve accessibility in the city of Salvador de Bahia. This document offers us the opportunity to once again thank the Vida Brasil coordinators and the accessibility project team based in Salvador de Bahia for sharing their experience with us.*
- ▶ *In 2004 I joined the organization as Technical Advisor on this theme. With a background in town planning and experience in adapting housing and making public spaces accessible, I drew up the first policy paper at the start of 2005 and passed this document on to a certain number of qualified people (HI program staff and staff working for our partners) for their comments and suggestions for improvements.*
- ▶ *Since 2005, I have been constantly updating this document with my own personal reading, collective thinking, feedback on experience in this field and the good practices identified both in-house and outside of the association. My missions in Brazil (2005 and 2008) and on Handicap International's programs in Indonesia (2005 and 2007), Nicaragua (2006), South East Europe (2006), Morocco (2006), Sri Lanka (2007), Madagascar (2007), Niger (2008), Ethiopia (2008) and Algeria (2009) have all provided valuable opportunities for developing our thinking on the theme.*

A policy paper should not be set in stone. It reflects our understanding and experience of a given issue, at a given time. This document will therefore be updated on a regular basis in the light of new experiences or new questions relating to the subject. Your contributions are therefore of the utmost value, so please do not hesitate to send us your good practices, tools and thoughts on the subject.

Eric PLANTIER-ROYON
Technical Adviser on Accessibility¹

This text is also available in French.

This document is intended for Handicap International's programs but could be distributed more widely, notably amongst our local partners.

The document has been written in a deliberately synthetic manner. It describes what accessibility is, why this theme needs to be acted upon, for which populations, who to work with and most importantly, how to work. There are also a large number of tools and reference documents which provide far greater detail. The references for these can be found as an appendix to this document.

Accessibility makes a vital contribution to increasing people with disabilities social participation

Wherever they may live, but in particular in developing countries, people with disabilities² faced a multitude of obstacles in their physical environment. These include **physical obstacles which prevent them from participating in social, cultural and professional life on an equal basis with other citizens**, and which also prevent them from fully exercising their rights.

A barrier-free environment is however, a key factor for the social inclusion of people with disabilities. Accessibility improves their participation and mobility and is a pre-requisite for a truly inclusive society. Beyond people with disabilities, it is **the entire society**, including the elderly, people in a temporary situation of reduced mobility, children, etc., who **benefits from improved accessibility**.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted at the

United Nations headquarters in New York on 26th December 2006, and came into force on 3rd May 2008, included **accessibility as one of the eight general principles** (Article 3) which form the basis of the Convention (other general principles include for example respect for inherent dignity or non-discrimination).

Handicap International (HI) has been acting since its creation to reduce obstacles to a full participation of people with disabilities. In this perspective, HI has been developing **one-off actions aimed at improving accessibility** of the physical environment (for example adapting public buildings), but **also full-scale projects tackling accessibility as a cross-cutting issue**, and looking at all its components, **including access to public transports, access to information and means of communication**.

1. Priscille Geiser has replaced Eric Plantier-Royon as Technical Adviser on Accessibility. Email: pgeiser@handicap-international.org
2. "People with disabilities" or "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", United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 1. "People with disabilities" is the terminology that will be used in this document in reference to the Convention. The term "people in disabling situation" can also be used to include people with reduced mobility.

In **development settings** (for example in Madagascar, India, or Nicaragua), as well as during **post-emergency reconstruction** (Indonesia, Myanmar, Iran, Sri Lanka, etc), the purpose is to build strategies and projects that reduce obstacles to participation of people with disabilities (people with different types of impairment); this is done in close cooperation with development actors, local communities and/or governments.

This document is a tool to help develop accessibility as a theme in its own right. It aims to support projects that include accessibility as a major theme, as well as numerous projects that include specific, one-off activities aimed at facilitating access for people with disabilities.

Accessibility involves a series of interventions on the physical environment and on the means of communication

An accessible environment is an environment which allows for the freedom of movement and use in total safety, regardless of age, gender, or impairments, of a space or product which can be used by all, with no obstacles, with dignity and the highest possible levels of independence.

The root of the word accessibility is derived from ACCESS which means “the possibility to go into, to enter a place etc.” which implies freedom of movement.

In any given area, accessibility relates to three main areas:

THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

- ▶ *Private residences occupied by people in disabling situations*
- ▶ *Buildings open to the general public: health centers, schools, places of work, town halls and other administrative buildings etc.*
- ▶ *Public facilities: markets, sports grounds etc.*
- ▶ *Public water supplies and sanitation facilities: wells, collective toilet or shower facilities, wash houses...*
- ▶ *Outdoor public spaces*



Accessible toilets on a sports field in Bangladesh

THE ACCESSIBILITY OF TRANSPORT

- ▶ *Public transport: notably in developing countries buses and trains*
- ▶ *Adapted transport and door-to-door transport services*

THE ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

- ▶ *Signposting in public buildings or towns*
- ▶ *Access to new information technology: accessible IT tools and websites, television subtitling, telecommunications*
- ▶ *Documents in Braille*
- ▶ *Sign language for the deaf*



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Using Braille in an inclusive school in Nepal

NB: The word accessibility can have **different meanings** for different people, for example:

- ▶ Financial accessibility of services,
- ▶ Geographical accessibility, linked to the concept of local services
- ▶ Social accessibility, in relation to the fight against stigma and psycho-sociological barriers etc.

This document only focuses on physical accessibility (physical environment and transports) and access to information and means of communication, as described in the above table.

Why work in the field of accessibility?

Throughout the world, and in particular in developing countries, people with disabilities are faced with the problem of limited access to basic services such as health services, schools, training and employment facilities, transport, water supply and sanitation etc. Ensuring this access is however fundamental to enable people with disabilities full social participation³ to the life of their community.

In order to work on the different elements for improving access to these services, it is important to work on their physical accessibility.

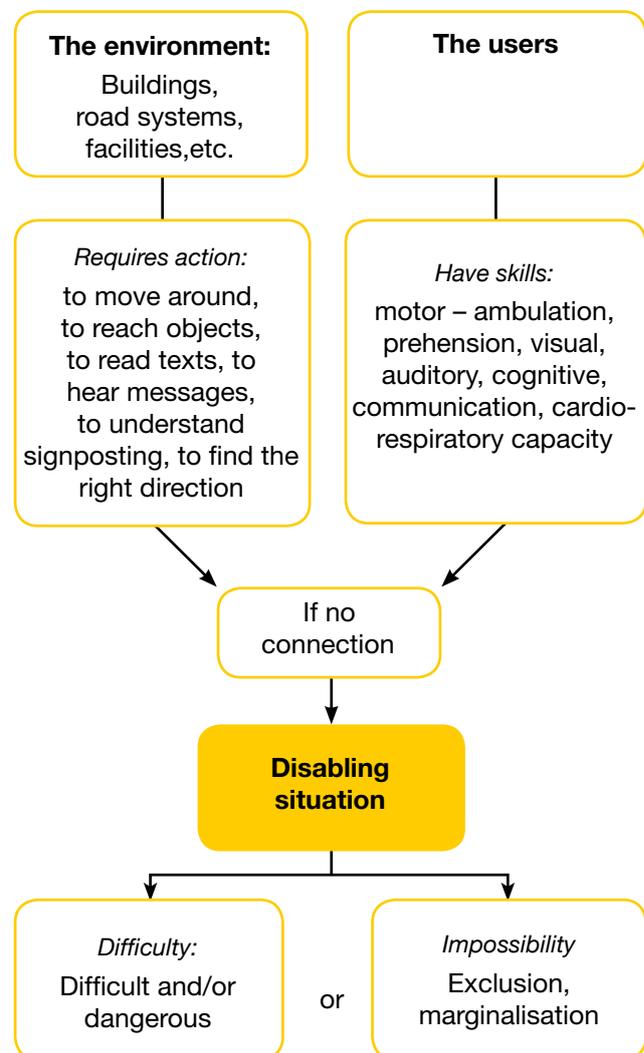
There are three main reasons for this:

SITUATIONAL DISABILITY AS THE BASIS FOR THE INTERVENTION

The introduction of environmental factors into the conceptual Handicap Creation Process (HCP) model, allows us to introduce the notion of “situational disability”. Indeed, an individual can be considered to be in a disabling situation when the interaction between the personal factors and environmental factors prevents them from continuing to carry on as normal in their daily life.

This is why the projects developed by Handicap International target not only the person themselves but also their environment. Human beings, more than any other species, strongly influence their own physical and social environment and are therefore well placed to adapt this environment.

Actions to improve accessibility change both the physical environment and the means of information and communication available. In doing so, they reduce in turn the number of obstacles or environmental factors for handicap creation. **It is therefore the environment which must be adapted to the person’s aptitudes, and not the other way round.**



Source: Learning kit - Accessibilité de la voirie aux personnes handicapées - CERTU - 2004

3. This document refers to the “social participation situation” as opposed to the “handicap situation”, as explained in the Disability Creation Process (P. Fougeyrollas): “A social participation situation refers to the total accomplishment of life habits, resulting from the interaction between personal factors (impairments, disabilities and other personal characteristics) and environmental factors (facilitators and obstacles)”.

THE NEED TO BUILD A CHAIN OF MOVEMENT AND TO WORK ON ALL THE LINKS IN THIS CHAIN

Ensuring the accessibility of the physical environment is not just a question of building access ramps, it is about **facilitating movement with a vision of the whole “chain of movement”**: this means that a person with a disability, whatever his/her impairment, should be able to move freely inside a housing unit, inside a collective residential building, from housing or residential building exits to the facilities and buildings open to the general public, in the various modes of public and private transport etc.

One missing link cancels out the benefits of all the others, makes access impossible and excludes the person. Ensuring the continuity of the chain of movement requires the full involvement of the majority, if not all, stakeholders (e.g. following parking regulations, respecting priorities on the road or pavement, giving up your seat on public transport etc.).

Good accessibility is built around the **RECU principle**:

Reach, Enter, Circulate, Use.

- ▶ Reach: Being able to get to the service you wish to use (transport, signposting, road systems etc.)
- ▶ Enter: Being able to enter buildings
- ▶ Circulate: Being able to move about inside buildings
- ▶ Use: Being able to use the services provided in the building

Of course, it is not always possible to create an unbreakable chain of movement in the short term. Contribution from concerned stakeholders and vigilance of all can only be built progressively. It is however, important and urgent to start working on the issue and to consider the whole chain when designing new buildings or when making existing structures accessible.

ACCESSIBILITY IS A RIGHT AND A PRINCIPLE, RECOGNIZED BY THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came into force on 3rd May 2008 and includes **accessibility as one of its eight general principles** (Article 3). This means that accessibility is an essential issue and must be addressed in a cross-cutting manner: people with disabilities will be able to fully enjoy each and every right mentioned in the Convention only if accessibility conditions are realized.

Accessibility is also the focus of a specific **article**:

Article 9 – Accessibility: To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:

- a) buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing medical facilities and workplaces;
- b) Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.

Accessibility requires taking into consideration all those with reduced mobility

The people who benefit first and foremost from improved accessibility are people with disabilities who have physical, sensory or intellectual impairments. It is important to highlight, in particular when dealing with public authorities and decision-makers, that beyond this target population, an accessible environment is an advantage for a far wider population: those with “reduced mobility” which covers a whole ranges of situations (the elderly, pregnant women, children and short people, etc.)

Finally, it is important to bear in mind that at

the end of the day an accessible environment is an advantage for the whole population as it is more comfortable and easier to use.

Handicap International works and campaigns in the area of accessibility as in all other areas, for **all types of impairment to be taken into account**, and not only physical impairments.

Despite the *clichés*, **accessibility does not only concern physical impairments and a variety of actions can be implemented for people with other types of impairments.**

Some obstacles, problems and solutions according to the type of impairment:

Type of impairment	Examples of difficulties faced	Accessibility required	Possible actions
- Visual : Person with sight Impairments, Blind person	- Seeing and understanding large shapes - Reading small writing or complicated texts - Spatial awareness and orientation - Moving about safely (obstacles, other users of two or four-wheeled vehicles)	- Improvement of visual perception - Mobilization of the other senses	- Installation of pedotactile strips on the ground as a guide and warning device, - Adapted signposting - Obstacle-free routes - Availability of audio or Braille formats
- Auditory : Person with hearing impairments, Deaf person	- Hearing audio information - Lip reading in badly-lit areas	- Transfer of information from audio to visual formats	- Signposting, - Quality of lighting and acoustics
- Physical : Person with difficulties in mobility, Person using walking aids and wheelchairs	- Moving around on loose, slippy or uneven ground - Passing obstacles or differences in level (steps, slopes) - Passing narrow passages - Reaching certain heights - Grasping, using objects - Seeing at certain heights - Covering long distances with no rest	- Removal of all obstacles on outdoor (roads and pavements) and indoor (entrance, exit, mobility inside buildings, facilities) routes and create the best possible conditions for using walking aids	- Different types of surfaces, access ramps and stairs, obstacle-free routes, adaptation of facilities and commands
- Mental / intellectual	- Learning difficulties and problems with orientation - Understanding signs - Memorizing an itinerary - Spatial awareness	- Any modifications or adaptations which improve understanding	- Signposting using images - Simple plans - Simple commands Clearly visible entrances to buildings

The intervention in project mode or as part of a project is based on seven key components

Accessibility is often developed as part of a project dealing with another theme, as it is a cross-cutting theme which affects all the other areas of Handicap International's work: health, functional rehabilitation, employment, education and training, sport, etc. It then constitutes a component on which greater or lesser importance is placed. Healthcare structures, orthopedic fitting and rehabilitation centers, sports and cultural facilities, schools and workplaces should all be accessible.

The documents produced, the means of communication used, and the meetings organized in order to implement our projects should also take accessibility into consideration.

The development of accessibility projects in their own right is also important to ensure the maximum possible impact when promoting the theme on a national or local level, and to ensure all forms of accessibility are tackled. Such projects help promoting a holistic approach with multiple actors concerned by this issue, and help implementing cross-cutting actions in a concerted manner to better address the challenge of an unbreakable chain of movement.

FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR DEVELOPING ACCESSIBILITY PROJECTS

1. As for most of Handicap International's projects, one of the favorable conditions to work on accessibility in a relevant and sustainable way is the **possibility to work with local organizations representing people with disabilities**. Their presence and involvement is indispensable. It is often important that prior to implementing actions the capacities of these representatives and the dialogue between them are reinforced to ensure they can dialogue effectively with others, notably the public authorities. They should be able to present a common discourse to increase the chances of their voice being heard.

People with disabilities and the organizations which represent them should be involved in accessibility projects on all levels: lobbying, dialogue, policy definition, advice, etc.

They are the natural project stakeholders and authors. The creation of a movement to

federate these organizations will encourage the development of a variety of interventions to promote accessibility.

2. An understanding of the national legislative framework (laws, orders and standards) is vital. This makes it possible to direct action either towards the practical application of existing laws or towards lobbying for a legislative framework if this does not exist or is seen to be unsatisfactory. It also makes it possible to raise awareness about technical standards which are often in place but not known or understood by construction stakeholders. The question of whether any international standards exist is often raised. There are currently very few international standards relating to physical accessibility; only one document published by AFNOR⁴ sets out a number of international principles.

4. AFNOR is an international services group with four main areas of activity: standardization, certification, specialist publishing and training.

3. Another favorable condition to set up accessibility projects is the involvement of a national or local authority. Whilst the national authorities are responsible for implementing the legislative framework, the local authorities are increasingly called upon to deal with the practical application of this legislation, as part of a general trend towards decentralization. They are therefore important stakeholders in accessibility projects, notably in terms of ensuring the sustainability of the actions put into place during the project's lifetime. It should be

noted however that **a lack of mobilization or interest from local authorities in accessibility prior to the project is not a sine qua non condition for launching a project.** Indeed, where there is a lack of political will, the project's activities may be implemented with the aim of preparing and organizing more effective advocacy which will lead, in time, to a change in attitudes and in policy.

THE SEVEN KEY COMPONENTS OF ACCESSIBILITY PROJECTS

Handicap International improves the level of accessibility in the countries where it works based on seven key project components:

- ▶ **information, awareness-raising and advocacy work**
- ▶ **stakeholder training**
- ▶ **sharing good practices**
- ▶ **improving / implementing laws and technical standards**
- ▶ **carrying out work to create examples of improved accessibility**
- ▶ **carrying out local diagnosis**
- ▶ **developing local plans to improve the accessibility of existing structures**

It should be noted that these components are interdependent and effective action on accessibility should combine work on all these different aspects. The capitalization / experience sharing / knowledge production process should also be used when writing up the project.

Component 1 Information, Awareness-Raising, Advocacy

This is the first level on which action should be taken at national and local level. It should promote collective awareness of the importance of accessibility, as part of the wider picture concerning the recognition and respect of the rights of people with disabilities.

Accessibility should not be seen as a constraint; a set of rules which must be adhered to, but rather as social added value which, when it forms an integral part of new building projects from the outset, does not generate additional costs.

This awareness-raising should make it possible to legitimize the issue in the eyes of the stakeholders concerned, or to initiate discussion about how this right translates in practical terms. Furthermore, whilst some of the work required to improve accessibility does indeed require significant levels of investment, other initiatives can be imple-

mented directly, both in communal and individual areas, by means of low-cost modifications. Awareness-raising should therefore encourage accessibility initiatives initiated by local stakeholders.

Information and awareness-raising should target very diverse audiences, and in particular:

- Civil Society, and in particular local organizations, national or international NGOs,
- Professionals or future professionals, notably practicing architects, engineers, technicians, project managers or students in these fields,
- Decision-makers, notably the national and local authorities who define and implement accessibility policies.

A wide variety of **communication materials**

and awareness-raising tools can be used: seminars, leaflets, comic strips, brochures, stickers, posters, television commercials, shows, protests, building audits, prizes for accessible buildings... **the most important consideration is whether the support chosen is adapted to the target audience.**

Awareness-raising work should be carried out by local stakeholders, in particular disabled people's organizations. Handicap International should position itself in relation to these local partners as a technical support provider.

There are two main situations in which Handicap International should carry out this kind of awareness-raising work directly:

- In crisis situations where local stakeholders have not yet been identified or are not yet ready to take action,
- When it is aimed at international development and emergency action stakeholders.

Keeping in mind that accessibility should be the concern of all, soliciting initiatives from local stakeholders who do not represent people with disabilities can be an interesting approach.

This action can be carried out within the framework of a "local initiatives fund" with calls for projects and selection groups. This procedure links the funding of local awareness-raising initiatives in with a second objective which is to reinforce the associations' project management capacities.

Finally, it is important that the "chain of movement" concept is integrated and promoted in awareness-raising and advocacy work to avoid an overly simplistic and incomplete vision of the issue (i.e. accessibility = ramp).

SUMMARY

Component 1 objectives:

- The different international, national and/or local partners, and in particular the decision-makers, institutions and organizations responsible for defining development strategies and implementing them in operational terms, recognize accessibility as a theme which must be taken into account in any project related to area planning.
- Organizations working in the field of disability have improved capacities in designing and managing advocacy projects on accessibility, thanks to the implementation of projects which have been pre-selected and have benefited from methodological support.

Generally speaking, the organizations find that the issue of accessibility is a point of convergence for their different actions. A further objective could therefore be included: "There is a network of disabled people's organizations who jointly organize awareness-raising and advocacy actions."

Example activities:

- Train a pool of "accessibility awareness-raisers" (members of disabled people's organizations) in accessibility advocacy techniques (definition, principles, diagnoses).
- Create local and national networks of disabled people's organizations and draw up an advocacy plan.
- Support activities such as making a film, organizing meetings on the theme of accessibility (conferences, seminars, national and international congresses) public events, press conferences, publication of brochures, leaflets, an accessibility guide for the town, annual awards for the local authority with the best accessibility project, etc.

AN AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITY OF PARTICULAR INTEREST: ACCESSIBILITY CARAVANS

The aim of this annual event during which key buildings open to the general public are audited, is to improve the public's understanding of the obstacles faced by people in disabling situations. A certain number of stars are awarded to each building according to its accessibility. These awareness-raising campaigns are extremely effective for at least three different reasons: the increased awareness amongst the general public and the media, the training of disabled people's organizations prior to the event, and the creation of a concerted dynamic for carrying out local diagnoses.

 Poor accessibility   Average accessibility    Good accessibility

For consideration to ensure quality of awareness and advocacy actions⁵:

- ▶ Adapting awareness raising methods and actions to the type of audience targeted (architects, municipalities, schools...).
 - ▶ Using participatory methods and placing participants in real-life situations.
 - ▶ Using accessible means of communication, in particular for people with sensory impairments.
 - ▶ Assessing the impact of awareness activities on the targeted audience: tests to measure the knowledge-attitudes-practices of stakeholders targeted by the actions at the start and the end of the project so as to calculate a percentage showing the progress made at the end of the project, compared to a reference value.
- ▶ “Activating” the knowledge gained by the groups targeted for awareness raising or training: number of actions on accessibility initiated by the trained audience following the training, number of decisions made by local authorities following awareness-raising actions.
 - ▶ Number of awareness actions and of local actors carrying these actions: only a critical number of actions will impact on collective thinking and public opinion.
 - ▶ Participation of the media to prolong the impact of awareness actions: number of media to be involved in the project. Reaching the media (press, radio, television, and electronic media) is important as they are opinion “shapers”. It is important to be able to influence their discourse and increase the quantity and quality of information provided on the theme.

5. For each project component, key points to consider in order to ensure quality of the proposed actions are presented, including a few examples of indicators. This list is not exhaustive and in any case, indicators must be adapted to each implementation context as well as to project's priorities.

Component 2 Stakeholder Training

In order to support local stakeholders, help them to understand the issues and accompany them in changing their practices, it is important to implement training, to pass on technical knowledge based on local standards or, where these do not exist, international standards and the principles of Universal Design.

This training/professional experience sharing may, as for awareness-raising, address a wide range of stakeholders:

- Local and national authorities,
- Civil servants working for ministries or local authorities,
- Architects, civil and infrastructure engineers, area planners,
- Engineering and design offices, construction companies, etc.

If tradesmen and companies are not trained in accessibility the work carried out may well be ineffective.

This training can be aimed at the local or international stakeholders involved in rebuilding in post-emergency phases as seen in Iran or Indonesia. Handicap International has been solicited in numerous reconstruction initiatives following the Asian tsunami of December 2004 and also supports integration of disability into disaster risk reduction actions.

Stakeholder training should be offered first and foremost to people with disabilities and their representatives. This will allow them to develop more targeted, and therefore more effective advocacy.

This training should be based on the presentation of the general guiding principles for any work carried out in the field of accessibility, the presentation of local good practices (where possible), the presentation of national laws and standards (if these exist), and practical work on the integration of accessibility using plans or on site with local project managers.

The training should use a wide range of educational tools such as: power-point presentations, group dynamics, films, individual work, building audits, simulations of disabling situations etc.

Training can be carried out either by consultants on short-term missions, or by project teams which themselves have been trained. Training may be carried out in conjunction with other actions; it can for example take place prior to carrying out a general diagnosis or launching awareness campaigns, etc.

SUMMARY

Component 2 objectives:

- The national and/or local construction and area planning stakeholders are trained in accessibility techniques.

Example activities:

- One day's training as an initiation.
- Training over several days to develop the trainees' knowledge.
- A training course of 10 – 15 modules lasting 1 – 2 hours for students, with homework.
- Setting up an accessibility resources and reference centre where training can take place.

For consideration to ensure quality of accessibility training:

- ▶ Training concerned professionals for an impact in the short term: increasing the number of professionals and resource persons having the capacity to intervene on the issue of accessibility.
- ▶ Integrating accessibility modules into the existing curriculum for student architects, area planners, and engineers. Our **actions take place as far as possible in partnership with training centers** (schools of architecture or town planning, construction engineering schools, etc.).
- ▶ Using pre-training tests to measure the current knowledge of the population to be trained, and post-training tests to measure the level of knowledge after.
- ▶ Using participatory methods and placing participants in real-life situations as faced by people with disabilities.
- ▶ A minimum number of post-training guidance missions for those trained (follow-up and support to ensure that knowledge gained can be translated into practical realizations).

Component 3 Sharing Good Practices

Another way of improving accessibility in a country is to gather and share existing good practices, to summarize them and to pass them on in order to:

- Draw out practical guidelines and analyze the mechanisms and stages required to implement them.
- Influence public policies on accessibility, for example by enhancing technical standards.
- Make the training and advice delivered locally more practical and better-adapted to the context.
- Draw up practical guides adapted to the context.

These good practices should be sought from both public and private-sector, and from local and international stakeholders.

SUMMARY

Component 3 objectives:

- Local, national and international good practices on accessibility are identified, compiled and published so they can be reproduced as widely as possible.

Example activities:

- Set up a steering committee which brings together civil society stakeholders including disabled people's organizations.
- Identify innovative practices on a regional or national level, or in a local area, collect these practices and summarize them.
- Present the results of this data collection and analysis in a pre-report.

- Run multi-stakeholder working groups (state and civil society) in order to propose public policy guidelines which incorporate these innovative practices (how can these be reproduced and made sustainable?).
- Publish technical guides which set out these good practices.
- Organize feedback seminars.

Prize for the most inclusive architectural project

One Handicap International initiative has been to launch the idea of an annual award for the most inclusive architectural project on a local or national level.

With several sponsors where possible, the objectives of this initiative are to:

- *Create a public relations and awareness-raising event on accessibility, the winner of the award is usually announced at an awards ceremony which is widely covered by the media.*
- *Organize the collection of local good practices files, and promote those which use the principles of Universal Design, those which place people with disabilities at the heart of the architectural design process, or which offer users multiple and flexible options for using the building so it can be made accessible to the maximum number of people.*
- *Create a selection committee, responsible for drawing up selection criteria and selecting the best projects. This selection committee provides an excellent opportunity for identifying local expertise on the issue of accessibility.*

A tool to exchange on these good practices is available on the website of the project entitled “Making it work!”: <http://www.makingitwork-crpd.org/>; see in particular the report “Free movement of persons with disabilities in Southeast Europe” (<http://www.makingitwork-crpd.org/miw-projects/south-east-europe/>).

For consideration to confirm quality of “good practices” on accessibility:

- ▶ Involvement/awareness of key stakeholders (decision-making actors and influential local development actors) to ensure the widespread diffusion of these studies.
- ▶ Efficiency and adaptation of good practices to the local constraints: good practices referring to low-cost work solutions using local materials.
- ▶ Ensuring the possible replication of good practices on a wider scale and/or in other settings/communities.

Component 4 Improving and Implementing Technical Standards and Laws

In order to make significant progress on accessibility in a country, it is **indispensable that there are national laws and standards in place.**

In the developing countries where we work there is often a legislative framework for accessibility, but this is rarely applied in practice.

The mere existence of a legislative framework is insufficient; **the most important fact is whether these laws and standards are applied in practice.**

The inspections and sanctions in place are

as important as the legal framework, and require high levels of political commitment.

Our actions should aim to both improve existing legal frameworks and ensure the effective application of these laws where they exist. The collection of good practices on a national level is another action which can be implemented to facilitate the application of national standards. This makes it possible to raise awareness of these practices and reproduce them.

SUMMARY

Component 4 objectives:

- The various local and national legal texts (laws, decrees, technical standards) have been improved and a policy drawn up to ensure the effective application of these texts.

Example activities:

- Support for initiatives to improve the legal and regulatory framework on accessibility.
- The publication, or assistance in publishing, technical guides to explain the standards in layman's terms using educational, illustrated documents, translated into the different local languages.
- Definition of adapted accessibility standards within the framework of the definition of model plans for State Primary Schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. These model plans will provide the basis for all new constructions built by international bodies such as UNICEF, the French Development Agency, etc.
- Support for initiatives to define and adopt national standards, help in identifying professionals interested in participating in this process, provision of technical documents, support for the publication and validation of standards.
- Setting up of local independent inspection commissions, including where possible people with disabilities, responsible for monitoring the application of laws and standards. In particular, these commissions can analyze new building projects (inspection of building permits prior to work starting and inspections at the end of building work).
- Providing local technical advisors in emergency contexts who can deliver free technical advice and provide information on existing laws and standards.

- In development contexts, set up resource centers to provide professionals with information. These centers should be easily accessible and free of charge to encourage the improved integration of accessibility standards.

These centers can also centralize all the information on accessibility (regulations, good practices case studies, technical guidelines, etc.).

For consideration to ensure quality of actions related to improvement of accessibility norms:

- ▶ Ensuring comprehensive actions: awareness-raising or training sessions must accompany the distribution of technical guides in order to initiate reflection on the enforcement of these norms; support to decision makers to implement measures for dissemination and enforcement (for example local commission to enforce standards).

- ▶ Building ownership of the concerned stakeholders: number of public buildings refused permission to open due to non-conformity with technical standards (this is a measure of the commitment and will of the local commission to enforce standards) ; number of written guidelines provided in emergency contexts for technical experts (written advice is often more detailed and complete)..

Component 5 Carrying Out Work to Create Examples of Improved Accessibility

These types of actions for improving accessibility are often specifically focused on one area related to one of Handicap International's sector projects such as inclusive education, professional integration, integration through sport, etc.

The priority is to avoid superficial "accessibility washing" and to create

good examples of work carried out to genuinely improve accessibility (i.e. quality and comprehensive actions) which can be reproduced by other stakeholders.

The work of these reference work sites should be publicized in order to increase local stakeholders' awareness of these actions.

Component 5 objectives:

- Work to improve accessibility is undertaken to create models which can be reproduced on a larger scale by local stakeholders.
- Handicap International provides other development stakeholders with technical expertise to ensure that accessibility is integrated into construction or area planning projects (for example, the public markets in Mahajunga in Madagascar, in partnership with the French Development Agency).

Example activities:

In the field of housing:

- Adaptation of housing occupied by people with disabilities based on a precise diagnosis of the person's impairments.

In the field of buildings open to the general public:

- Work to adapt facilities open to the general public (school buildings, sports and cultural buildings, administrative buildings and tourist attractions, buildings for employment and trade).
- Work on the accessibility of Handicap International's premises in order to set an example and increase the awareness of both in-house staff and those outside of the association.

The accessibility of water supplies and sanitation:

A lack of access to water supply and sanitation facilities makes persons with disabilities even more vulnerable than people without disabilities. They have no access to drinking water, and cannot wash or use domestic sanitation installations. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals which aim to reduce extreme poverty and improve access to healthcare and drinking water will never be met unless the needs of people with disabilities are taken into account.

In this area Handicap International:

- Carries out studies on the obstacles which people with disabilities may encounter when trying to access water supplies and sanitation (see the report on access for people with disabilities to water, hygiene and water treatment, produced in Mali, 2007).
- Proposes innovative solutions to overcome these obstacles.
- Carries out work to make wells (e.g. by installing solar powered electrical pumps) drinking fountains and individual or collective latrines accessible.

The accessibility of public transport:

A lack of accessible transport, and in particular public transport, is one of the main barriers to the socio-cultural integration of people with disabilities. Whilst the development of urban public transport (tramways, underground services or bus routes with specially spaced stops) certainly requires high levels of investment, Handicap International is capable of implementing low-cost actions in this area such as:

- Raising existing bus stations, developing bus stops,

- Facilitating the identification of bus lines using different colors and visible signposting,
- Supporting initiatives to develop door-to-door transport services.

ELECTIONS:

An ideal opportunity to work on accessibility

Election time is a particularly good time to work on accessibility to support a greater participation of people with disabilities as citizens and to improve their access to voting rights.

In addition to the accessibility of polling stations (access ramps, the width of doorframes and corridors, the provision of seating in the waiting area, polling booths which are wide enough and well-lit etc.), it is important to consider access to information for all people with disabilities whatever their disability. The following types of activities can be developed in order to take into account all types of impairments and the accessibility of information and awareness-raising actions:

- *Awareness-raising amongst people with disabilities and/or their representatives prior to voting on the importance of voting, voting rights and the electoral process,*
- *Work to register people on the electoral roll, or even to ensure people are in possession of their birth certificates and/or identity cards,*
- *Training for people with disabilities so they can become official election observers with the aim of changing society's perception of people in disabling situations,*
- *Voting guides and ballot papers in Braille so that the blind and sight impaired can vote autonomously in secrecy.*
- *Signposting at the entrances of polling stations to improve people's understanding of the process. This should describe the various stages in the voting process using illustrations (presentation of constituency boundaries, provision of the ballot paper and envelope, choosing the ballot paper to be inserted in the envelope in the booth, etc.),*
- *Provision of a special ballot box for people with reduced mobility (people with disabilities, elderly people, pregnant women, etc.).*

Accessibility projects should set aside part of their budget to fund “model” work to improve accessibility. Ensuring their quality is therefore of the utmost importance. Handicap International's programs also receive regular requests to fund work to improve the accessibility of buildings or public spaces. These funding should be granted only if these constructions or adaptations are meant to be models and can serve as example.

If the accessibility of new buildings or facilities is taken into account as of the design stage, the additional costs are extremely limited (1 – 2% for public buildings).

For consideration to ensure quality of work to improve accessibility (funded by Handicap International)

- ▶ Applying a comprehensive approach of accessibility according to the principle of RECU: these projects should not settle for partial accessibility, and should aim for the highest possible levels of accessibility by ensuring it is possible to reach the building in question, to enter it, to circulate within it and to use the different services available. This should be possible for all people with disabilities, whatever the type of their disability.
- ▶ Following the rules of Universal Design: The projects must apply the rules of Universal Design Dessin Universel, and should not stigmatize people with disabilities (for example a gently sloping entrance for all rather than a main stair-

case for people without disabilities and a separate ramp for people with disabilities).

- ▶ Associating people with disabilities: The projects should include people with disabilities at least at the design stage
- ▶ Involving the required technical expertise: The projects should be coordinated by a technical expert experienced in both construction and accessibility techniques. This expert can be a local consultant or a member of the project team.
- ▶ Optimising the impact of projects: The projects should be “reproducible” on a much larger scale, that is to say be possibly imitated by a bigger number of actors in order to promote a “culture of accessibility”.

Component 6 Carrying Out Local Accessibility Diagnoses

The accessibility diagnosis is used to assess the barriers to mobility in a given space (a road, a market, a school, etc.) and inside existing private or public-sector facilities. It should lead to the identification of the main difficulties, with the aim of proposing effective, low-cost solutions.

The diagnoses carried out across a district or town allow for numerous individual diagnoses of public buildings, roads, squares and outdoor areas, shops, etc.

This makes it possible to obtain an overall picture of accessibility in the area studied. These diagnoses also provide the opportunity to initiate dialogue between people with disabilities and/or their representatives, and the local authorities. The diagnoses are excellent information and

communication tools. They record in detail the accessible and non-accessible facilities and are therefore highly effective tools in raising the awareness of the stakeholders concerned. They are also excellent tools for advocacy.

A general methodology of local participatory diagnosis (that can be used for other issues such as social perceptions of disability or mapping of local actors in the field of disability) is available. Specific recommendations are presented below to conduct a local diagnosis on accessibility.

Key points for consideration to ensure quality of a local accessibility diagnosis:

- ▶ General diagnoses should be coordinated by an **accessibility professional** whose skills have been validated by Handicap International's technical advisor. Individual diagnoses in each study area should be carried out by trained technicians.
- ▶ **People with disabilities should participate** in the diagnosis. All impairments should be represented as different impairments mean different problems. These participants have an important role to play in choosing the places to be studied and carrying out the diagnosis as they provide differing perspectives on problems which are not always visible to, or understood by the technicians.
- ▶ The diagnosis should **preferably be carried out in collaboration with the local authorities**. In addition to the local authorities, the diagnosis should try to include as many of the stakeholders concerned as possible, including, for example, public or private property owners, student architects, etc. As far as possible, feedback on the diagnosis should be given to all those included in the consultation phase.
- ▶ The technicians who prepare the diagnoses should, where possible, **estimate the cost of work to improve accessibility**, so that the work to be carried out can be scheduled and priorities set in terms of concrete objectives.
- ▶ Once the places to be diagnosed have been selected, prior consultation should be carried out and written consent obtained from the owners for surveyors to enter their premises.
- ▶ A questionnaire should be developed, based on the national regulations, for each type of premises targeted by the survey. It should include the same sequence of questions (circulation, furniture, signposting, welcome, etc.).
- ▶ The participation of architecture, area planning and engineering students adds value to the project as they are the future town planners.
- ▶ The diagnosis should be applied as far as possible by surveyors working in pairs made up of a technician and a representative of people with disabilities, which serves to build the capacities of both members of the pairing.
- ▶ All surveyors should be selected using written tests and interviews.
- ▶ **All the people selected for the survey should receive at least one day's training**. Receiving training is a compulsory pre-requisite for participating in the diagnosis.
- ▶ The results of the study as regards the accessibility of the town (summary presenting the main needs identified and recommendations) should be widely publicized (number of documents distributed or available on websites, etc.).

Component 7 Developing Local Plans To Improve The Accessibility Of Existing Structures

Working on a local scale is a relevant level of intervention when the aim is to work on concrete and operational improvements to the accessibility of buildings and public spaces. It allows proximity actions with results that are visible to all.

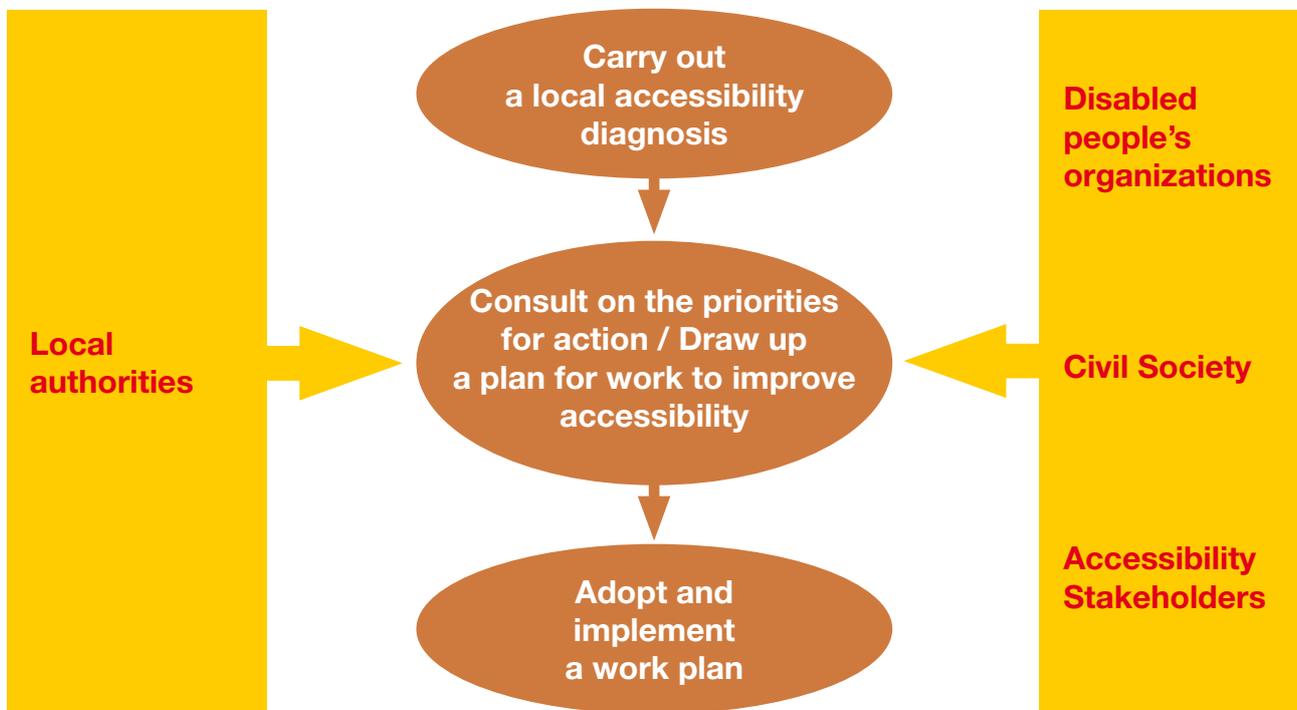
The development of local pilot projects should be favored as this makes it possible to reproduce local experiences on a larger scale. It is therefore important that capitalization, modeling and the sharing of experience are used to publicize the approach developed as widely as possible. This in itself can constitute a significant component of the project.

Working on a local level also makes it possible to work with local authorities, as well as disabled people's organizations. This is particularly important in countries with

decentralized government, as they have specific responsibility for certain key fields such as hydraulics, construction, urban planning and transport (areas that are often prioritized in decentralization processes). The involvement of the local authorities guarantees the sustainability of the actions undertaken within the framework of an accessibility project⁶.

If the conditions are favorable (for example: local authorities already aware and ready to make long-term commitment to accessibility), the launching of a full-scale local accessibility development project should be considered.

These actions should be structured in the following manner:



6. When it is not possible to work with a local administrative authority, actions in the field of accessibility can be launched directly with specific actors mobilised on this issue (schools, training centres, etc). However the impact of this type of actions will be more limited and it will be necessary to look for opportunities to sustain such actions through mobilisations of local authorities. Local authorities should feel responsible for accessibility and feel they can easily discharge this issue on other stakeholders.

After carrying out an accessibility diagnosis of the existing infrastructure in a town or district, the first key stage in the process⁷, we should then look at **supervising consultation between the local authority and civil society to draw up an action plan, define priorities and start work to improve accessibility.**

SUMMARY

Component 7 objectives:

- The local authorities, the disabled people's organizations and other representatives of civil society define and implement in a concerted manner, a local plan for work to improve accessibility in the existing environment.

Activities to implement:

- Set up a local accessibility commission which brings together civil society and the local authorities.
- Carry out a general accessibility diagnosis across the territory.
- Consultation and definition of priority actions.
- Draw up an action plan which sets out the aims, the budget and the person responsible for each action.
- Annual commitments from the local authority regarding the implementation of this action plan.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the work carried out.

For consideration to ensure quality of actions aimed at developing local accessibility plans:

- ▶ Ensuring that development of such plans takes place within a good local governance process: concerted process between local authorities, civil society representatives including disabled people organizations, based on the assessment of the local situation (diagnosis, cf. above component 6) and leading to concrete work to make buildings accessible (cf. above component 5).
- ▶ Enforcing the local plan, and ensuring its translation into concrete realizations: indicators such as the minimum percentage of spaces studied which have improved accessibility at the end of the project can be considered, or the minimum number of actions in the plan concerning transport, of actions in the plan concerning the accessibility of information and communication, of actions in the plan concerning non-physical impairments.
- ▶ Contributing to awareness and mobilization of all: minimum number of awareness-raising and training actions in the plan.
- ▶ Promoting coordination between multiple stakeholders, and involvement of an increased number of actors on accessibility: number of construction and area planning professionals involved in the local commission, number of different people in charge of carrying out at least one action contained in the plan, number of associations other than disabled people's organizations involved in the local commission.
- ▶ Sustaining efforts: at the end of the project, new laws, programs or actions to promote improved local accessibility are drawn up, applied or carried out.

7. The diagnosis process is a facilitator to start a consultation between local stakeholders, and it could continue with the prioritization, monitoring and evaluation of the actions developed.

We also supervise the drawing up of town charters, setting out a town's commitments within the framework of a local or general accessibility intervention. This aims to improve both physical accessibility in the medium term, and access to the same information for all. This accessibility chart generally sets out the main principles for ensuring genuine accessibility for all. It aims to define the concepts to be applied by all stakeholders to make the town, its transport system and its built environment user-friendly for all citizens. The main points are:

- ▶ To guarantee the accessibility of new facilities and the continuity of the “chain of movement”,
- ▶ To plan improvements to all existing property,
- ▶ To organize consultation with all stakeholders: elected officials, area planners, professionals and, of course, people with disabilities or their representative(s),
- ▶ To provide personal accompaniment (adapted support provided for those who need it by trained personnel),
- ▶ To provide quality information that is accessible to all.

EXAMPLES OF EXPECTED RESULTS FOR PROJECTS AND INTERVENTIONS IN THE FIELD OF ACCESSIBILITY

- ▶ Authorities (at national or local level) have developed and implement policies and procedures ensuring that accessibility concerns are integrated in the design of new buildings and public spaces, and/or that existing buildings are made accessible.
- ▶ Professionals and decision-makers involved in construction, urban planning and transports better take into account accessibility norms in the design and realizations of new projects.
- ▶ Accessibility is better included in existing training curriculums in architecture, urban planning and civil engineering.
- ▶ At the end of the project, people with disabilities have a better access to local services, information and means of communication to realize their life habits⁸.
- ▶ Individual and collective capacities of people with disabilities are reinforced in the field of awareness-raising, advocacy and/or technical accessibility audit to encourage better consideration for accessibility issues by decision-makers and concerned stakeholders.

8. « Life habit is a daily activity or a social role valued by the person or his/her socio-cultural context according to his/her characteristics (age, sex, socio-cultural identity, etc.) which ensure his/her survival and well-being in his/her society throughout their lifetime” (P.Fougeyrollas, Disability Creation Process).

Handicap International's key cross-cutting principles on accessibility

A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MULTIPLE ACTORS

Accessibility is the responsibility of all actors in society. The issue of accessibility cuts across the other technical fields of health, employment, education, further training, leisure and sports and culture.

This means that health, sports and cultural facilities, schools, workplaces, orthopedic fitting centers and functional rehabilitation centers should all be accessible.

This cross-cutting approach is justified by the need to realize an “unbreakable chain of movement” allowing people with disabilities to move freely from their home to any public place to use any service. Its importance is reflected in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which considers accessibility among its general principles (Article 3).

People with disabilities and the organizations which represent them should be involved at all levels of accessibility projects: advocacy, dialogue, inspections, policy definition, carrying out diagnoses, advice, etc.

They are the natural stakeholders and authors of projects. The creation of a movement to federate these organizations

encourages the development of various interventions implemented to promote accessibility.

In addition to using disabled people organizations, it is often necessary to ensure the project is successful that several activities are carried out at the same time which target different groups.

The main groups to target in order to promote a cross-cutting and comprehensive approach to accessibility are as follows:

- **Civil Society**, in order to transform the “charitable” vision of persons with disabilities into a more positive vision of a person capable of acquiring total autonomy in the right conditions, which include an accessible environment.
- **Architects, engineers, and urban planners** both in practice and students, etc. These are the people who design and will design facilities and buildings. It is important to ensure that they are aware of “disability” and what this involves in terms of their professional practices.
- **Public authorities**, these are the people who define and apply accessibility policies.

AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH

The most inclusive planning option should always be selected: A main entrance to a public building with a gentle slope rather than a monumental staircase is more comfortable for all, and is a more inclusive solution than fitting a staircase for people without disabilities and a ramp for people with disabilities.

Handicap International's work is inspired by the principle of Universal Design which aims to simplify people's lives by producing products, means of communication and a built environment that can be used by the maximum possible number of people

and which, in addition, result in little or no excess costs.

The principle of Universal Design should be applied to any building or facility intended for the collective use of large numbers of people.

In contrast, the work to improve the accessibility of private homes or work stations should be carried out according to the specific impairments of each individual concerned. This work is then closely linked to work on ergonomics (adapted housing, workstations etc.), and is based on a precise diagnosis of the person's situation.

A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

- ▶ Accessibility projects **make it possible to reinforce the right to accessibility**, a fundamental right as set out in the 8 guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 3), and reflected in a specific article (Article 9).
- ▶ Accessibility projects **also encourage national or local authorities, and international development stakeholders to assume their responsibilities**, notably through their systematic involvement in project steering committees, working groups for local diagnoses or even local accessibility commissions.
- ▶ Accessibility projects **help build people with disabilities and/or their representatives' capacities to take action** (awareness of and lobbying for the right to accessibility, possible role in providing technical expertise)
- ▶ Accessibility projects encourage **participative work between local authorities and disabled people's organizations**.
- ▶ Accessibility projects contribute centrally to the principle of non-discrimination, through reducing obstacles that prevent free movement and equal participation from all.

A GENDER-BASED APPROACH

Women in disabling situations often experience difficulties in accomplishing the domestic tasks they are usually responsible for in traditional societies (fetching water, cooking, childcare, etc.). Improvements in the accessibility of their immediate environment are therefore particularly important for them, notably in terms of access to housing, wells, water pumps and toilet facilities.

Our projects will therefore seek out partnerships with organizations or groups of women with disabilities, notably when carrying out accessibility awareness-raising work and advocacy.

OUR IN-HOUSE TOOLS...

Resource kit: Introduction to accessibility “Creating an accessible environment, towards an inclusive society”

Eric Plantier-Royon, Technical Resources Division, September 2008

This CD contains the following information:

- Presentation of the main principles of accessibility
- Presentation of the main areas of intervention
- Tool box for our four areas of intervention: 1) information / awareness-raising, 2) training, 3) implementation of a legislative framework and, 4) local consultation and technical recommendations for people with different types of impairment (physical, sensory, intellectual) and each link in the chain of movement (housing, buildings open to the general public, outdoor spaces)
- Presentation of our main accessibility projects.

Available in English and French

Manuel d’orientation pour la conception et la mise en œuvre de projets dans le domaine de l’accessibilité architecturale et urbaine

Vida Brasil / Handicap International Production, June 2006

Based on experience of the project “Is Salvador a disabled city?”, study available on line:

In English:

http://handicap-international.fr/bibliographie-handicap/4PolitiqueHandicap/niveau_local_communautaire/devlocal_ville/ENvidabrasil.doc

In French:

http://handicap-international.fr/bibliographie-handicap/4PolitiqueHandicap/niveau_local_communautaire/devlocal_ville/FRvidabrasil.doc

Accessibilité : propositions d’amélioration de l’accessibilité aux personnes handicapées

Vincent David, Accessibility and Infrastructure Coordinator in Cambodia, August 2007

Based on the Cambodia Program’s experience.

Available in French

Guide à l’usage des décideurs : Aménagement urbain et accessibilité

Céline Abric, Madagascar Projects Coordinator, November 2007

Available in French and Malagasy

Free movement of Persons with Disabilities in South East Europe: an inaccessible right?

Raphaëlle Sestranetz / Lisa Adams, Handicap International, Regional Office for South East Europe, June 2006

Available in English:

<http://www.makingitwork-crpd.org/miw-projects/south-east-europe>

How to build an accessible environment in developing countries

Vincent David, Accessibility and Infrastructure Coordinator in Cambodia, December 2008
Based on the Cambodia Program's experience.

Available in English:

Manual 1 - Introduction and Accessibility standards

http://www.handicap-international.fr/fileadmin/documents/publications/Manual1_light.pdf

Manual 2 - Access to water and sanitation facilities

Part 1: Toilets and closed showers

http://www.handicap-international.fr/fileadmin/documents/publications/Manual2-1_light.pdf

Part 2: Open washing areas and water points

http://www.handicap-international.fr/fileadmin/documents/publications/Manual2-2_light.pdf

Manual 3 - Free movement

http://www.handicap-international.fr/fileadmin/documents/publications/Manual3_light.pdf

How to build an accessible environment in developing countries: Accessibility in remote areas and difficult context – cases studies Burmese Border Camps Thailand

Booklet 1: Introduction to disability, accessibility and refugees camps

Booklet 2: Cases studies from theory to reality

Vincent David, Accessibility and Infrastructure Technical Referent, September 2009

Based on the experience in Burmese Border Camps in Thailand.

Available in English

Guidelines for creating barrier-free emergency shelters

Michael Curtin, "Disaster Preparedness and Disability" Project, Handicap International Nepal, February 2009

Available in English:

<http://www.handicap-international.fr/fileadmin/documents/publications/CreatingBarrierFree2009.pdf>

Access Elections: Highly visible model on accessibility

Handicap International Banda Aceh, December 2006

Report on the experience of Handicap International in Indonesia, with examples of checklists for accessible polling stations.

Available in English

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Accessibility for the Disabled – A Design Manual for a Barrier Free Environment

Solidere / United Nations, 1998

A technical guide produced in 1998 by Solidere, The Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut Central District, in collaboration with the United Nations - Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and with the support of the Ministry of Social Affairs and National Committee on Disability.

Available in English:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/designm/index.html>

Water and sanitation for disabled people and other vulnerable groups: designing services to improve accessibility

Hazel Jones and Bob Reed, Water Engineering and Development Centre, Loughborough University, 2005

The main focus of this resource book is on access to domestic water supply and sanitation, which may be at either household or communal level. Some of the ideas and suggestions can also be applied in institutional settings, such as schools and hospitals, and in some emergency situations.

Available in English and French

Access for all: helping to make participatory processes accessible for anyone

Save the Children, November 2000

Available in English:

http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/access_for_all.pdf

Enhancing the mobility of disabled people: Guidelines for practitioners

United Kingdom's Department for International Development, 2004

Learn about access to public transport and pedestrian ways in developing countries.

Available in English:

http://www.transport-links.org/transport_links/filearea/publications/1_831_ORN%2021.pdf

Handicap et Construction. Conception et réalisation : Espaces urbains, bâtiments publics, habitations, équipements et matériels adaptés

Louis-Pierre Grosbois, Editions du Moniteur, 2008

The most complete french book about accessibility.

Available in French

OTHER RESOURCES

Through our previous and current activities and projects we have built up a network of accessibility experts which include:

- Institut d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de Lille
- ONADA (Observatoire National de l'Aménagement Durable Accessible)
- Architecture et Développement
- Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC)
- Vida Brasil
- Samarthyam (National Centre for Accessible Environments), Inde
- CARPA (Collectif des Associations du Rhône pour l'Accessibilité)

GLOSSARY⁹

Accessibility

Accessibility means that everyone has equal access to the built environment with no discrimination based on one's level of ability. It can be defined as being the opportunity that an individual, at any given location and of any given ability, possesses to take part in a particular activity or a set of activities within the built environment.¹⁰ It implies that the built environment must be truly usable for all.

Accessibility audit

An in-depth analysis of a building or space to assess what needs to be adapted or changed in order to make the existing space barrier-free to all. This kind of assessment is usually carried out by professionals including occupational therapists, architects, urban planners and engineers including people with disabilities.

Accessibility standards

These are the minimum standards for designing accessible spaces to people with disabilities particularly geared to people with physical impairments.

Barrier-free environment

A barrier-free environment implies that any person despite their age or ability can move throughout the environment without facing any barriers in the built environment.

Building codes

These are a set of rules that specify the minimum standards for safety for constructed objects generally based on public health, safety and general welfare. Building codes become law when they are enacted by the appropriate authorities.

Built environment

These are environments created or modified by human beings so that people may live in them such as buildings, squares, children's play areas, monuments, natural parks, designated paths and places where services are offered such as ramps, walkways and urban furniture.

Design-for-All

Means designing developing and marketing mainstream products, services, systems and environments to be accessible and usable by as broad a range of users as possible.¹¹

Mobility

Mobility refers to the ease with which a person can move about. It relates to the person's particular abilities, the accessibility of the built environment, and the support services and resources available to the person concerned.

9. Definitions are taken from the Disability Monitor Initiative Report: Free movement for people with disabilities in South East Europe: an inaccessible right?, Handicap International, 2006.

10. Jones M P, 1975, Accessibility, Mobility and Travel Need: Some Problems of Definition and Measurement, Paper Presented at the I.B.G. Transport Geography Study Group Conference, University of Birmingham, September 11-12, 1975. Jones S R, 1981, Accessibility Measures: A Literature Review, Transport and Road Research Laboratory, Berkshire.

11. Background Document of the European Conference "Discrimination by Design" held on the European Day of Disabled People, 3 December 2001.

Unbreakable chain of movement

The unbreakable chain of movement entails that a person with any type of disability can move freely within their home and go from their bed to town to any building or space they choose by any means of transport and return home without facing barriers or being exhausted. One missing element is enough to cancel out all efforts and improvements conducted elsewhere, and can result in shutting out people with disabilities by making the environment inaccessible to them. The “continuity” of the “mobility chain” therefore appears to be the key element for facilitating free movement within the built environment for all.

Universal Design¹²

“Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. The intent of universal design is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications and the built environment more usable by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities.” What this concept implies is that spaces should not be adapted but should be designed and built in a more inclusive way that meets the needs of all people, including people with disabilities.

- It is based on seven principles:
- Equitable Use
- Flexibility in Use
- Simple and Intuitive Use
- Perceptible Information
- Tolerance for Error
- Low Physical Effort
- Size and Space for Approach and Use

12. As defined by Ron Mace, Center for Universal Design, NC State University, North Carolina, 1997

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