

Zero Project Report 2015

Focus: Independent Living and Political
Participation

International study on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights
of Persons with Disabilities

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For more information on the report, to download versions, and for further analysis of the Zero Project, visit www.zeroproject.org

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“For a World without Barriers”

FOREWORD BY MARTIN ESSL

Founder, Essl Foundation



I can hardly believe that it has been eight years since my wife, Gerda, and I started the Essl Foundation. It seems both a lifetime ago and yet only yesterday.

And so much has happened in just the year since I wrote the Foreword to the Zero Project Report 2014.

The Zero Project itself has grown by leaps and bounds. The Zero Project Conference is just one example. In February last year we held our first ever conference at the headquarters of the United Nations here in Vienna. At the three-day event, focusing on accessibility, we were honoured to welcome 360 delegates from 50 countries around the world. This year, again at the UN, over 400 experts and other concerned individuals joined us from 60 countries to focus on “Independent Living and Political Participation,” and to discuss the newest set of Innovative Policies and Innovative Practices for persons with disabilities.

This is a special year for the Zero Project for another reason: co-funding by the PROGRESS program of the European Union enables us for the first to carry the Zero Project to local decision-makers in Austria, the project's home country. Over the coming months we will organize nine Zero Project Austria conferences throughout the country, will produce a separate report that is targeted towards the Austrian situation, and will create a website dedicated exclusively to the Austrian context.

Next year we will complete our first circle of research: After researching Employment (2013), Accessibility (2014) and Independent Living and Political Participation (2015), in 2016 the focus of our research will be Education. After that, we will re-visit Employment, giving us also the opportunity to analyse change and change processes for the first time. With the Social Indicators that we have been re-searching since the beginning of the Zero Project, we have the right tools at hand.

None of the work we do would be possible without our global network of experts. Whereas last year these numbered in excess of 2,000 men and women around the world, we are now in a position to benefit from the expertise and knowledge freely shared with us by more than 3,000 disability experts in over 150 countries. To all of them I convey, as always, my heartfelt thanks.

We continue to see our mission as promoting change – change that will both improve the lives of person with disabilities and, by helping advance the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, enable them to take their rightful place in the world.

Our aim remains and will always be for a world without barriers.

Martin Essl
Founder, Essl Foundation | January 2015

List of Acronyms

AAT	Applied Assistive Technologies	ILO	International Labour Organization
ADAP	Accomodating Diversity for Active Participation	ISL	Individual Supported Living
ANED	Academic Network of European Disability Experts	ITU	International Telecommunication Union
API	Association for Promoting Inclusion	Ltd.	Limited (registered company)
DCYP	Disabled Children and Young People	MIUSA	Mobility International USA
DMH	Department of Mental Health	MP	Member of Parliament
DPI	Disabled Peoples` International	NGO	Non-governmental organization
DPO	Disabled Peoples Organizations	NOUSPR	National Organization of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry
DRPI	Disability Rights Promotion International	OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
EASPD	European Association of Service Providers	PA	Personal Assistance
EBU	European Blind Union	PAB	Personal Assistance Budget
ECS	Environmental Control Systems	PAS	Personal Assistance Services
EDF	European Disability Forum	PO	Personal Ombudsman
EEG	European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community Based Care	RIADIS	Latin American Network of Non-governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families
ENAT	European Network of Accessible Tourism	SAVE	Sexual Abuse Victim Empowerment
ENIL	European Network for Independent Living	ULO	User-led organization
e.V.	eingetragener Verein (registered Association)	UN	United Nations
FRA	Federal Rights Agency (of the European Union)	UN CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
GAATES	Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments	UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
GmbH	Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung (registered company)	UNHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
ID	Intellectual Disability	UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
IDA	International Disability Alliance	WHO	World Health Organization
IE	Inclusion Europe	WHOCC	World Health Organization Collaborating Centre
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems		
IL	Independent Living		

Executive Summary

The Zero Project

The Zero Project, its organization and its vision of a world without barriers.

Social Indicators

Measuring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 150 countries

Innovative Policies

11 laws and regulations by governments that have an outstanding impact on Independent Living and Political Participation

Innovative Practices

39 projects, programs or social enterprises that have an outstanding impact on Independent Living and Political Participation

About the Zero Project

The Zero Project was initiated by the Essl Foundation in 2010, and has run in partnership with the World Future Council (WFC) since 2011 and with the European Foundation Centre (EFC) since 2013. The mission of the Zero Project is to work for a world without barriers, according to the principles and Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).

Innovative Practices and Policies
The project advances its mission by researching Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies worldwide that help to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, as well as by researching social indicators that measure the implementation of the UN CRPD and the current situation in all countries of the world. The most successful and most readily replicated practices and policies are then presented in the project's annual report, with specific guidance as to how and

Independent Living includes the opportunity to make choices and decisions regarding where to live, with whom to live, and how to live.

European Network of Independent Living

to what degree these can be expanded to other regions and countries. The annual report then guides a wide variety of decision-makers and opinion-leaders worldwide, including UN and EU bodies, national and regional parliamentarians, organizations supporting people with disabilities, service-providers, foundations, and academics.

Network approach
The Zero Project is the work of a small core team of professionals from the Essl Foundation, the WFC, and the EFC, whereas the expertise that supports the project's work comes from a huge network of disability experts from around the world. Every year the research focuses on a specific topic: In 2012–2013 it was Employment; in 2013–2014 it was Accessibility; in 2014–2015 it is Independent Living and Political Participation; and in 2015–2016 it will be Education.

Zero Project conference, report, and website
The Zero Project team organizes the annual Zero Project Conference in Vienna every February. It publishes an annual report, updates the Zero Project Website, and presents its results in leading conferences and congresses around the world.

Zero Project Austria
In 2014–2015 the Zero Project also conducted research on Innovative Practices and Policies that have special relevance to Austria – the country of the Zero Project headquarters. In a separate research process, all shortlisted nominations were selected exclusively by Austrian experts in order to identify those that are most relevant for the Austrian context.

The results of the “Zero Project Austria” are published in a separate report and on its own website (in German). They will also be presented at a series of conferences, one of which is held nationally – as part of the international Zero Project Conference in Vienna – as well as another nine conferences to be held in the nine capital cities of the Austrian provinces. The Zero Project Austria 2014–2015 is co-funded by the PROGRESS program of the European Union.

The Right to Independent Living and Political Participation

The focus of the Zero Project research for 2014–2015 is Independent Living and Political Participation

Independent Living
Article 19 of the UN CRPD “sets out a right to live independently and be included in the community, recognising that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” (“Choice and control: The right to independent living,” a report published by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2012).

Two related articles of the UN CRPD should also be taken into consideration when approaching the concept of Independent Living, as these address many aspects of people's lives:

- Article 12: right to equal recognition before the law
- Article 28: right to an adequate standard of living and social protection

These jointly create a framework for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community.

According to the European Network of Independent Living,¹ this means in practice that:

Independent Living is the daily demonstration of human rights-based disability policies. Independent Living is possible through the combination of various environmental and individual factors that allow disabled people to have control over their own lives. This includes the opportunity to make choices and decisions regarding where to live, with whom to live, and how to live. Services must be accessible to all and provided on the basis of equal opportunity, allowing disabled people flexibility in our daily life. Independent Living requires that the built environment and transport are accessible, that there is availability of technical aids, access to personal assistance, and/or community-based services. It is necessary to point out that Independent Living is for all disabled persons, regardless of the level of their support needs.

Political Participation
As noted in a 2014 report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights²:

Given an accessible and enabling environment, persons with disabilities are active citizens keen to be engaged in the political life of their communities. As well as voting in elections, persons with disabili-

FACTS ABOUT THE ZERO PROJECT

3,000

Experts contributing since 2011 (appx.)

650

Experts contributing 2014–2015 (appx.)

231

No. of nominated Practices/Policies 2015

58

No. of nominating countries 2015

50

No. of Innovative Practices/ Policies 2015 (39/11)

150

Countries covered by Social Indicators (see below)

30

No. of Social Indicators

275

No. of questionnaires respondents

450

Participants at the Zero Project Conference 2015 (registrations as of Feb 16, 2015)

ities take part in other types of political activity in large numbers, including being members of political parties, attending political meetings and contacting elected officials. Providing more accessible information and processes, as well as better support and reasonable accommodation – that is, adjustments to allow persons with disabilities to enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with others – can further improve their participation.

Implications for governments are, according to Inclusion International³:

- Government policies and practices must ensure persons with intellectual disabilities are registered at birth to facilitate their civic participation to vote.
- Governments must ensure voting processes are accessible to allow persons with intellectual disabilities to contribute as equal citizens.
- When required, supports and safeguards must be provided to allow persons with intellectual disabilities to engage in political practices without outside influence.

1) Source: www.enil.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/FAQ_Independent_Living.pdf
2) Source: http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-right-political-participation-persons-disabilities_en.pdf
3) “Independent but not alone,” 2014; <http://inclusion-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Independent-But-Not-Alone.pdf>

Researching Social Indicators, Innovative Practices, and Innovative Policies: The network approach of the Zero Project

The Zero Project engages its network of experts, including a high percentage of persons with disabilities, in the nomination, research, and selection processes of Innovative Policies and Innovative Practices as well as in its Social Indicator research, which is based on a questionnaire sent out to the expert network. Participating in a kind of “crowd intelligence” system, these experts contribute their knowledge and expertise to the identification of outstanding examples and replicable models – that is, solutions that are particularly innovative and effective in advancing the implementation on the UN CRPD, compared to other practices and policies that are in use.

This approach is in line with many scholars who work in the area of justice and human rights. Amartya Sen, for example, states in his book *The Idea of Justice* that “Justice-enhancing changes or reforms demand comparative assessments, not simply an immaculate identification of ‘the just society’ (or ‘the just institutions’).”

In 2014 more than 2,000 persons and organizations from almost every country of the world were ap-

proached to join in the research process, and more than 800 were requested to fill in the questionnaire of the Social Indicators. A total of 650 experts from more than 150 countries participated in this year’s research (see Annex, Zero Project network).

During the research process, 231 nominations were made by experts from 58 countries. Hundreds more contributed in the selection process by commenting, evaluating, and voting, based on such criteria as innovation, impact, scalability, and professional approach. Ultimately, 39 Innovative Practices and 11 Innovative Policies – all of them addressing Independent Living and Political Participation – were selected.

During the period September–November 2014, 275 experts from 150 countries answered the Social Indicators questionnaire. Almost half of these experts (134) belong to the Disabled People’s International network, and the Zero Project is especially grateful for its continuing support.

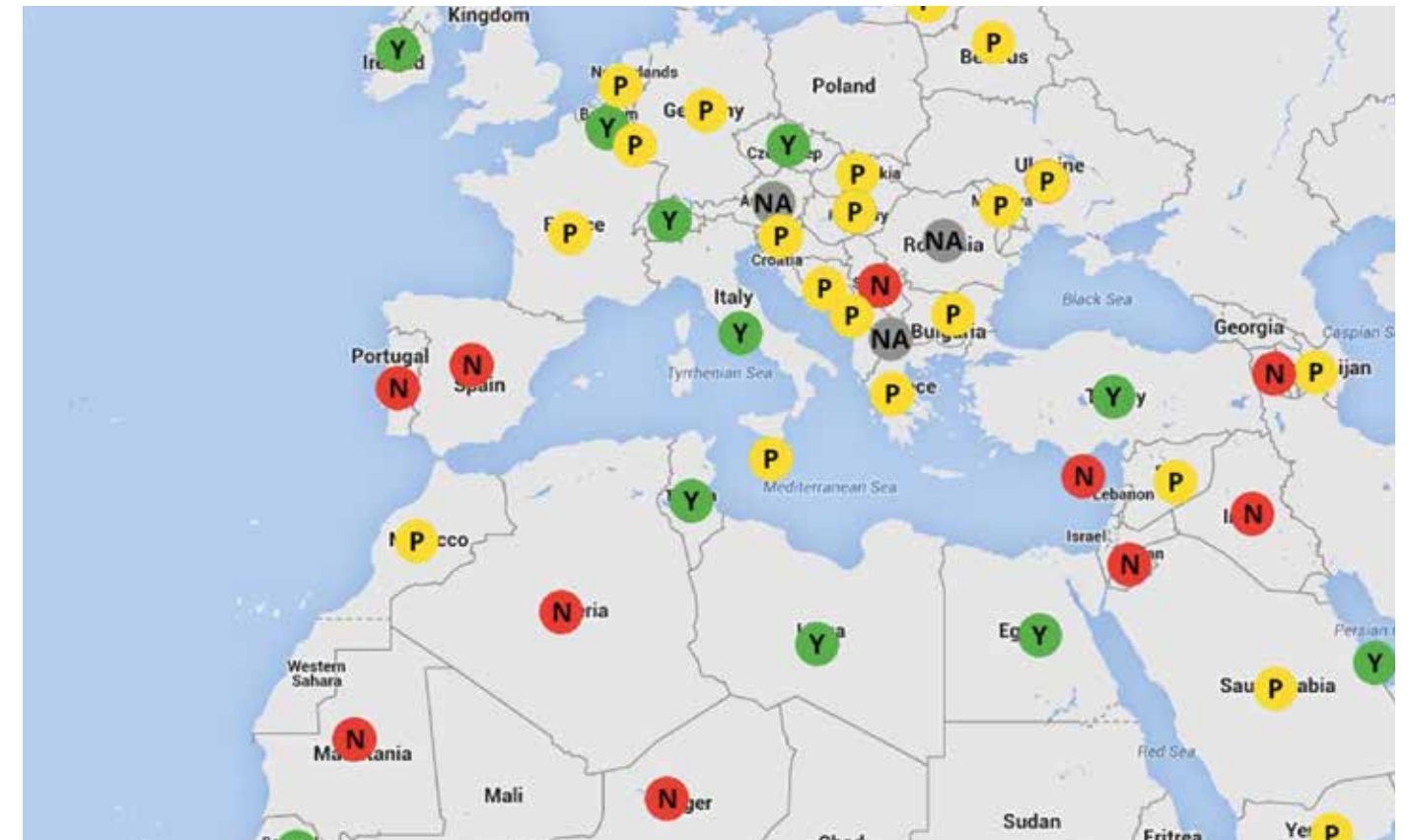
Key findings of the Social Indicators

The Zero Project Indicators 2015 consist of 30 questions that can be split in two groups:

- 16 questions cover a range of key UN CRPD Articles, and have been surveyed in a consistent manner since 2011. These questions ask for details on the implementation of the UN CPRD regarding general issues, and specifically regarding built environment, transport, emergencies, education, data collection, employment, independent living/ political participation, and CRPD implementation and monitoring.
- 14 questions are adapted to the annual theme of research. This year the theme is “Independent Living and Political Participation.” Thus, the usual questions in these areas were augmented to include:
 - a. Independent Living (10 questions)**
 - Equal recognition before the law
 - Personal rights
 - Community-based service and alternatives to institutions
 - Legal and social protection
 - Assistance and support
 - b. Political Participation (4 questions)**
 - Access to justice
 - Access to information
 - Political rights
 - Access to voting procedures



One of eleven Innovative Policies: In Belgium (Flanders) persons with disabilities can choose to receive a Personal Assistance Budget, which allows them to fully control the support they receive.



Question 21 of the Social Indicators asks: If forms of residential care exist in your country, are there any alternatives to institutions and do people with disabilities have choice and control over the services they use? This world map is taken from the Zero Project website: Red indicates that the answer is „no,“ orange indicates „Yes with qualifications,“ and green indicates „yes.“ The website gives you other opportunities for research as well, like searching for names and explanations of respondents.

Main results of quantitative analysis of all Social Indicators

- The question with the most “Yes” responses (green lights): 52 percent of all respondents worldwide claim that persons with disabilities are not discriminated against in their right to marry and have children.
- At the bottom end of the table, only 3 percent of respondents believe that the public transport system in the main capital is accessible for all.
- Only 6 percent of respondents state that there is available data on the number of university graduates with disabilities.
- Only 6 percent of the emergency alarm systems in use are accessible to everyone.
- 93 percent of respondents believe that no satisfactory system of personal assistance services is available in their country.
- Within the group of indicators related to Independent Living, the “best score” is given to the availability of services and technologies, but still only with 20 percent of respondents answering “Yes.”
- Within the group of indicators related to political participation, availability of accessibility is “worst” – with only 18 percent of respondents answering “Yes.”

WHAT IS AN INSTITUTION?⁴

An institution is any residential care facility where:

- Residents are isolated from the broader community and/or compelled to live together;
- Residents do not have sufficient control over their lives and over decisions that affect them; and
- The requirements of the institution itself tend to take precedence over the residents’ individual needs.

4) Source: <http://deinstitutionalisationguide.eu/wp-content/uploads/Common-European-Guidelines-on-the-Transition-from-Institutional-to-Community-based-Care-English.pdf> (p. 10)

Main results of qualitative analysis of the Social Indicators on Independent Living

Insitutions still as predominant forms of care
In many countries, especially in Eastern Europe and in the states of the former Soviet Union, institutions still exist and people do not have an option but to live there, since the government does not have the capacity to provide services to the community, as explained by a respondent from Ukraine.

Community-based services and alternatives to institutions
In some countries from the Global South, especially in Africa, institutions do not exist, and it is mostly family members who provide care (mentioned in Belize, Benin, Ghana, Suriname). In countries where instiutions are present, alternatives might exist (as experts state in the case of Ethiopia), but these are not considered preferable. In both cases implementation of the UN CRPD is still far from a reality.

Poor monitoring of institutions
In general, monitoring seems to be more common in European countries as well as in other countries with greater financial capability. But respondents from the United States point out loopholes in the U.S.



Innovative Policy from Uganda: The country legislated that elected political bodies at all levels must reserve a minimum number of seats for representatives of persons with disabilities. Hon. Asamo Hellen Grace, one of Uganda's parliamentarians representing persons with disabilities of Eastern Uganda in Parliament, speaking at a conference on disability & HIV and AIDS, organized by National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda.

MAIN RESULTS ON ELECTIONS

Promising practices of alternative and assisted voting and accessible elections:

- postal vote applications (Australia, Luxembourg, and most other countries)
- availability of a special phone number (Australia)
- home voting (Azerbaijan, Estonia, Serbia)
- mobile voting booths (Bhutan, Cook Islands, Czech Republic)
- electronic voting (Estonia, Finland)
- provision of wheelchair accessible polling stations (Estonia, Mauritius, Netherlands)
- possibility of voting at hospital or other institutions (Ireland)
- assistants who are allowed to help blind voters (Bangladesh, Finland, Iraq, Mauritius, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, South Sudan)
- training for election officials (Austria)
- electorate information regularly available in audio versions (Armenia)
- TV broadcasts in sign language (Estonia)

legislative framework, especially regarding institutions related to health (such as psychiatric hospitals) where monitoring can only be done by health bodies that are not independent (reported as well in The Netherlands and Peru).

Assistance is very limited in most countries
In many countries, assistance and support are only available for certain types of disabilities (Mauritius, Moldova, Uruguay). Very often, persons with disabilities must rely on their own ability to pay for their personal assistance and assistive devices since assistive technology or more specific devices are often difficult to receive from public funding. This is due to either a strict assessment of people's needs (Canada), limited public funding, availability from private sector only (Germany, United States, Hungary), waiting lists from government programmes, or availability for civil servants only (as in Ghana).

Where there is no state-sponsored assistance, civil society plays an essential role. In many countries in the Global South assistive device provision relies heavily on NGOs, volunteering, social welfare, and grassroots organizations (Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Cook Islands, Honduras, Moldova, Nigeria, Liberia).

Results of qualitative analysis of the Social Indicators on Political Participation

Restricted voting rights
Comments showed that in many countries there are restrictions regarding the right to vote by secret ballot in elections, especially for blind people or persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, who need to vote through their assistant. These situations clearly violate their right to confidentiality (Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Kyrgyzstan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Spain, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Zimbabwe).

In many countries, intellectual disability is a criterion that can affect an individual's eligibility to vote, which is defined sometimes as "limited capacity to vote" (Ivory Coast, Mauritius, Tanzania, Turkmenistan, Estonia and Finland). Furthermore, in developing countries illiteracy – expecially among people with disabilities (for example, 96 percent in the Ivory Coast) – is a determinant barrier that prevents people with disabilities to vote.

In regards to the right to be elected, especially in developing countries, people with disabilities experience cultural stigma within their society. Thus, despite the absence of a specific legal framework that denies them this right, they generally do not dare to present themselves for elections. In most countries, constitutional texts clearly define "sound of mind" as a condition for a person to be elected, thus preventing people with intellectual disabilities to stand for most government positions (Ireland, United States). According to experts, Iraqi law prohibits people with intellectual disabilities to hold government positions. In Pakistan, for example, persons with disabilities other than intellectual disabilities have the right to be elected, but some posts are restricted, such as Prime Minister or President. The legal framework differs from reality, however, where normally no person with a disability is in Parliament.

Analysing data via the Zero Project website and Open Source Data
The Annex includes two tables on the Zero Project Indicators: A breakdown of all 242 analysed questionnaires and all 30 questions, and a summary of the quantitative research.

All data, including the names and organizations of respondents, countries, and comments, can be best viewed on the Zero Project website in the Indicators section. Every answer can be viewed via world maps. The complete open source data is also freely available for download on the website, enabling everyone to conduct their own research.

THE STORY OF BREE-ANNA

“This is my Microboard!”



My name is Bree-Anna, and I am from British Columbia, Canada. Due to the physical and developmental challenges that I face, I need assistance with things such as my daily life activities, transportation to college and recreational venues, and voting during elections. I also need assistance with managing my paid support needs.

Over ten years ago my parents heard about Vela Microboards. In British Columbia support to set up a Microboard is available for free through Vela. We thought it was a great idea to manage my supports and services with assistance from family and friends. My parents, along with my brother, a number of our extended family members, and several friends, created a non-profit organization just for me! This is my 'Microboard'.

The members of my Microboard know my wishes, needs, and practical information, such as my favourite foods, so I am sure they will support me to make the best decisions for my life. What I like most about my Microboard is the support that it provides me to do fun things I enjoy, like tubing on the lake in the summer, going out to eat, attending parties, and exploring new adventures together. I am really happy to have people I know and trust helping me to manage my life.

Innovative Practice from Canada (British Columbia): A Microboard is a small group of family and friends who join a person with disabilities to create a non-profit organization so as to support the person to create the life he or she envisions. The network enhances supports that may previously have been solely the responsibility of parents or other relatives.



Innovative Practice from the United States: The three-week Women's Institute on Leadership and Disability (WILD) program of Mobility International USA (MIUSA) has trained more than 200 women with disabilities from over 80 countries on strategies for improving the lives of women and girls with disabilities.

Key findings of Innovative Practices

Assistance and Budget

Several Innovative Practices have developed models on how to organize and finance personal assistance, and how to organize personal budget models, where financial support is given to persons with disabilities themselves and not to service providers. In the "employer model," for example, the person with a disability is the employer of her or his assistant(s), and an organization hired by that individual then provides all the services that are needed.

Community Living

Another group of Innovative Practices has developed models of community living, where persons with disabilities, including those with intellectual and multiple disabilities, have a real possibility to choose where to live and with whom, which is a prerequisite for deinstitutionalisation and a clear requirement of the UN CRPD. Some of these Innovative Practices, for example, use apartment sharing, "Microboards," and create affordable and efficient support systems for families and care givers.

Peer support

Some practices work especially on peer support, using the capabilities of persons with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties. Their first-hand experience and knowledge of many societal issues enables them to be experts in their field. Peer support includes training and teaching models, and it also creates jobs and new professions.

Self-empowerment

A group of Innovative Practices concentrate on the empowerment of persons with disabilities, training them in communication, literacy, etc. Others initiate and support groups of self-representatives and/or work on self-representation and access to justice. Quite outstanding work is done by those Innovative Practices that support groups of persons with disabilities that are even more vulnerable, e.g., deaf women in male dominated societies or victims of sexual abuse.

DEFINITION OF AN INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

Innovative Practices of the Zero Project are projects, programmes, social enterprises, etc. that:

- are creative, professional, successful, and scalable
- can be transferred or copied to other countries/regions/contexts and have a measurable impact
- speed up the process of implementing the UN CPRD

Participation in public and political life

Combining issues of Independent Living and Political Participation, several Innovative Practices train persons with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties, in self-representation towards administrations, service providers, etc. Such Practices often include political participation so that the voices of persons with disabilities are heard in the media, in political consultations, in public speeches, and/or in consultation processes for new policies. Some even work towards preparing persons with disabilities to run for political office.

Accessible elections

A very distinct group works on the accessibility of elections for all, which includes election tools (e.g., Braille ballots and election materials), training for election staff, physical accessibility of polling stations, access to information on elections, etc.

THE STORY OF DUMITRIȚA

"The five years I spent in an institution for children with disabilities in Moldova felt like an eternity."



My name is Dumitrița, and I am a 14-year-old girl with disabilities and learning difficulties. Support services did not exist where I lived, and the mainstream school would not accept me. My family could not afford the education and

care I needed, so I was placed in an institution for children with disabilities. This place was far from home, which made family visits very difficult. In the institution I missed very much the love and care of my parents and sister.

Being reunited with my family – thanks to support from Lumos – was a dream come true! For two years now I have been studying at the mainstream school close to my home. Today, I feel like part of the community. I am very happy living with my family, all of whom love and support me. I also like my new school, where I am doing well and where my friends and teachers understand me. I am a strong advocate for inclusive education in our school's discussion group, and I speak out whenever I can. My dream is that all children with disabilities in Moldova can live with their families. I want to help other children to return home and give them confidence and hope for a better future.

Innovative Practice from the United Kingdom: Together with the Moldovan Government, the Lumos Foundation has promoted an integrated policy and programme of deinstitutionalisation and inclusive education for children with disabilities. This allows them to leave residential care and to return to their families and communities while receiving education in a mainstream school.

Key findings of Innovative Policies

For different government levels and bodies

Innovative Policies 2015 are established at all levels of government, from the local/municipal level (Sweden's Personal Ombudsmen) to the regional level (Upper Austria and Flanders) up to the national level (Sweden, United Kingdom, etc.). Some policies concern exclusively the most important legislative body at the national level: e.g., the Parliament (South Africa, Japan, etc.). Others concern the mandate and operation of an independent agency organizing and overseeing elections: e.g., the Electoral Commission (New Zealand, etc.). In order to ensure the full implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities, it is crucial to mainstream their rights at all levels of policy-making.

For persons with all types of disabilities

Many existing policies include their own, restrictive definition of disability or refer to a definition found in another law, often the country's antidiscrimination law. However, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons

DEFINITION OF AN INNOVATIVE POLICY

Innovative Policies have achieved identifiable improvements on the ground, and have demonstrated a positive dynamic of change that can be easily replicated in many countries to advance the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). Like all innovation, some policies may be incomplete or dependent on other developments to maximize their impact. Some policies, no matter how positive, may also contain elements of old thinking. Since the implementation of the UN CRPD is a work in progress for all countries, these elements are taken into account in the overall assessment of innovation.

with Disabilities does not include a definition of disability, and states explicitly in its Article 1 that persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments. Policies should be reformed accordingly. The overall goal should be to avoid spelling out an unavoidably restrictive definition of disability and instead to implement steps relevant for all "regardless of disability," as stated, for example, by New Zealand's strategy for electoral access.

Including the most excluded groups

There are persons with certain types of disabilities that are more severely affected than others. These include persons with extensive disabilities who need daily assistance in order to be able to live independently in their family's or their own home. Sweden is one of the few countries that have established a right to a personal assistance budget.

Among the most neglected groups are also persons with severe mental and psychosocial problems. In such cases, the Personal Ombudsmen in Sweden have proven to be true "change makers" in the lives of many disabled persons. Similarly, in Upper Austria persons with disabilities who have psychiatric experience can become qualified peer counsellors who can then help other disabled persons currently in psychiatric care.

Persons who are placed under guardianship often lose their legal rights, including their right to vote. A spectacular 2013 court ruling in Japan established that provisions that deprive persons under guardianship of their voting rights are unconstitutional, and the repeal of such provisions led to the enfranchisement of more than 136,000 people.

Also, easy language users are another group that is often neglected by policy-makers. An exception is this year's Innovative Policy that comes from New Zealand, where the national strategy aims for electoral accessibility for all, including people with learning and intellectual disabilities.

THE STORY OF ADOLF RATZKA

"My assistants enable me to work"

My assistants enable me to work. One of their most important functions is to accompany me on trips as head of the Independent Living Institute. Since my wife has her own work – she is an occupational therapist – we only travel together on vacations. And then, too, I take an assistant along, since I want to have the same role within my family that I would have had without my disability. Money for the costs of the accompanying assistant's airline tickets, hotel room, meals, etc. is part of the monthly payment from the Social Insurance Fund. Thus, I do not have to apply and fight for such expenses every time I travel.



Dr. Adolf Ratzka encountered his disability as a result of contracting polio at the age of 17, and he has had to rely on personal assistance ever since. He imported the Independent Living movement to Sweden from the United States and founded the Stockholm Cooperative for Independent Living, which was behind the introduction of the Swedish law that established the right to a personal assistance budget.

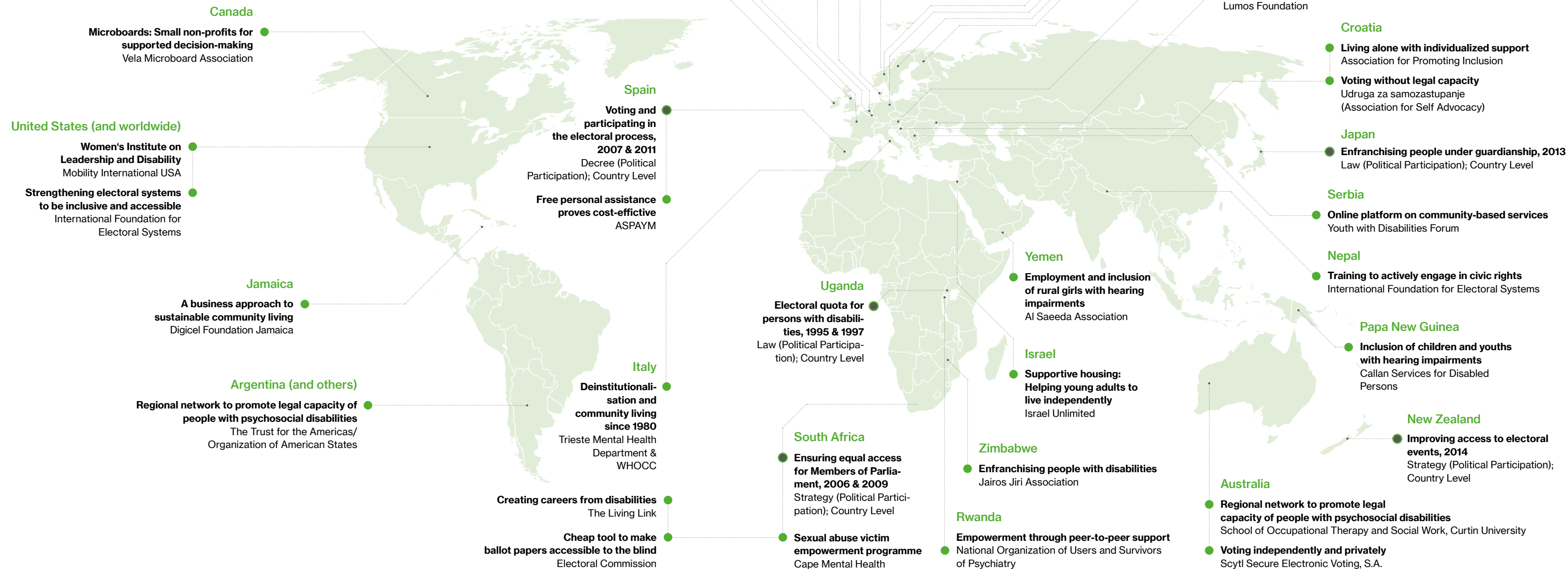


Question 30 of the Social Indicators: Is the official electorate information produced by the election management body accessible to all? This world map is taken from the Zero Project website: red indicates that the answer is „No,“ orange indicates „Yes with qualifications,“ and green indicates „yes.“ Using www.zeroproject.org allows various kinds of in-depth analysis.

Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies

ZERO PROJECT 2015

- Innovative Practice
- Innovative Policy



Key Findings of the Zero Project Social Indicators

Worldwide coverage

Coverage of 150 countries worldwide makes the Zero Project Social Indicators a unique wealth of data

30 questions

Designed to focus on concrete implementations of the most important rights granted by the UN CRPD

Qualitative analysis

All available data has been analysed quantitatively but also qualitatively by researching comments and explanations

Website

The full set of data is available on www.zeroproject.org, best to be seen on interactive world maps

Key Findings of the Social Indicators

MEASURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN CRPD WITH 30 QUESTIONS IN 150 COUNTRIES

The work of the Zero Project (first launched in 2011) is based on Social Indicators designed to measure the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). It was only later that Innovative Practices and Policies were added to the research.

The Zero Project's Social Indicators are designed to complement the work of national monitoring bodies, federal bureaus of statistics, and international organizations that measure the implementation of the UN CRPD. They are based on questionnaires that are completed by experts who assess the implementation in their own country (or country state). The questions are designed to focus on concrete implementations of the most important rights granted by the UN CRPD, as stated in its Articles.

The questions asked of expert panels can be answered by “Yes,” “Yes, with qualifications,” or “No” – illustrated with a traffic light system (green, yellow, red) and every option explained. Respondents are encouraged to comment on the answer they have chosen.

During the period September–November 2014, 275 experts from exactly 150 countries answered the Zero Project Questionnaire.

Experts in all countries of the world are approached, including representatives of grassroots organizations, national umbrella and membership organizations, service providers, academics, consultants, social entrepreneurs, and others. Several organizations support the research by forwarding the questionnaire

to its members. Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) takes a leading role in that respect, encouraging its members from more than 100 countries to participate in the survey.

Experts are selected by the Zero Project team, based on experiences from former years and peer recommendations of other members of the network, and are approached by email. The questionnaire can be answered online in any of four languages (English, French, German, and Spanish), and is also available in accessible MS Word documents in seven languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) on the Zero Project website. (The full questionnaire appears in English in the Annex.)

2015: The implementation of the UN CRPD with a focus on Independent Living and Political Participation
Since 2013 the Zero Project Indicators have consisted of approximately 30 questions that can be split in two groups:

1. Seventeen questions cover the range of key Articles of the UN CRPD and have been posed in a consistent manner since 2011. These questions ask for details of the implementation of the UN CPRD regarding built environment, transport, emergencies, education, data collection, employment, independent living/political participation, and CRPD implementation and monitoring.
2. All other questions are adapted to the annual theme of research. This year the theme is “Independent Living and Political Participation.” Thus, the usual questions in these areas were augmented to include:

- a. Independent Living
 - Equal recognition before the law
 - Personal rights
 - Community-based service and alternatives to institutions
 - Legal and social protection
 - Assistance and support
- b. Political Participation
 - Access to justice
 - Access to information
 - Political rights
 - Access to voting procedures

The scope of the survey 2015

During the period September–November 2014, 275 experts from exactly 150 countries answered the Zero Project Questionnaire. Almost half of those experts – 134 – came from the DPI network, and the Zero Project is especially grateful for its continuing support.

Coverage of 150 countries worldwide makes the Zero Project Indicators a unique wealth of data and background information on the implementation of the UN CRPD. This is especially true as the number of participating countries has grown dramatically over just five years:

- 2010: 15 countries
- 2012: 36 countries
- 2013: 55 countries
- 2014: 130 countries
- 2015: 150 countries

Countries with the highest response rate are the United States (16), Ireland (13), and Belgium (10). Countries still not covered in the survey include Ecuador, Iceland, Iran, Mexico, and South Korea. Only questionnaires where at least 15 questions were answered have been included in the analysis, reducing the number from 275 to 242.

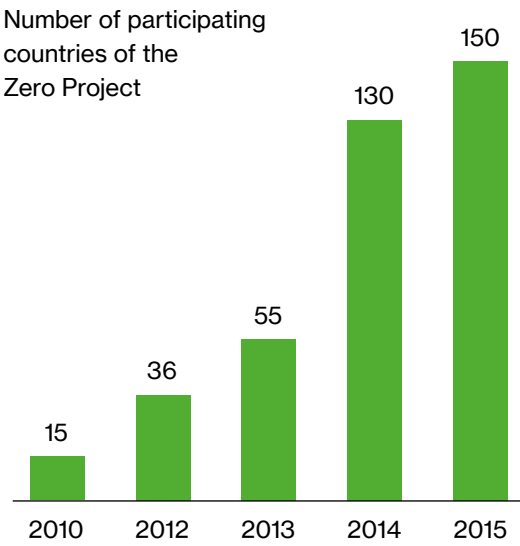
Regional breakdown:

- Europe: 79 replies from 36 countries
- Asia & Pacific (including central Asia and Middle East): 52 replies from 37 countries
- Northern Africa: 4 replies from 6 countries
- Sub-Saharan Africa: 44 replies from 32 countries
- Latin and Central America & the Caribbean: 34 replies from 26 countries
- North America: 16 replies from 2 countries
- Oceania: 13 replies from 11 countries

How data has been analysed

For this report, quantitative and qualitative analysis based on both the responses (“traffic lights”) and the comments of the experts has been made. The re-

WORLDWIDE COVERAGE



search team focused on clear patterns of responses that were supported by the comments of the experts as well.

The answers provided by the experts are purely based on their experiences and perspectives. Due to this limitation of the quality of data, the research team did not use more than a basic set of averaging, ranking, etc.

Using the Zero Project Indicators

Zero Project website: All data, including the names and organization of respondents, countries, and comments, can be best viewed on the Zero Project website in the Indicators section. Every single question can be analysed via world maps. The maps can be zoomed in and out. When clicking on a symbol, the name of the respondent and additional remarks, if available, are shown, making it easy to access and compare data.

Open source data: The complete open source data is also freely available for download on the website, enabling everyone to conduct their own research.

The Austrian Barometer of Inclusion

In 2014 the Zero Project has, for the first time, conducted a survey together with Lebenshilfe Österreich (Inclusion Austria) to analyse differences in Independent Living among the nine Austrian country states. The results will be published in the Zero Project Report: Austria 2015 and on the Zero Project Austria website (starting April 2015).

OUTSTANDING FACTS

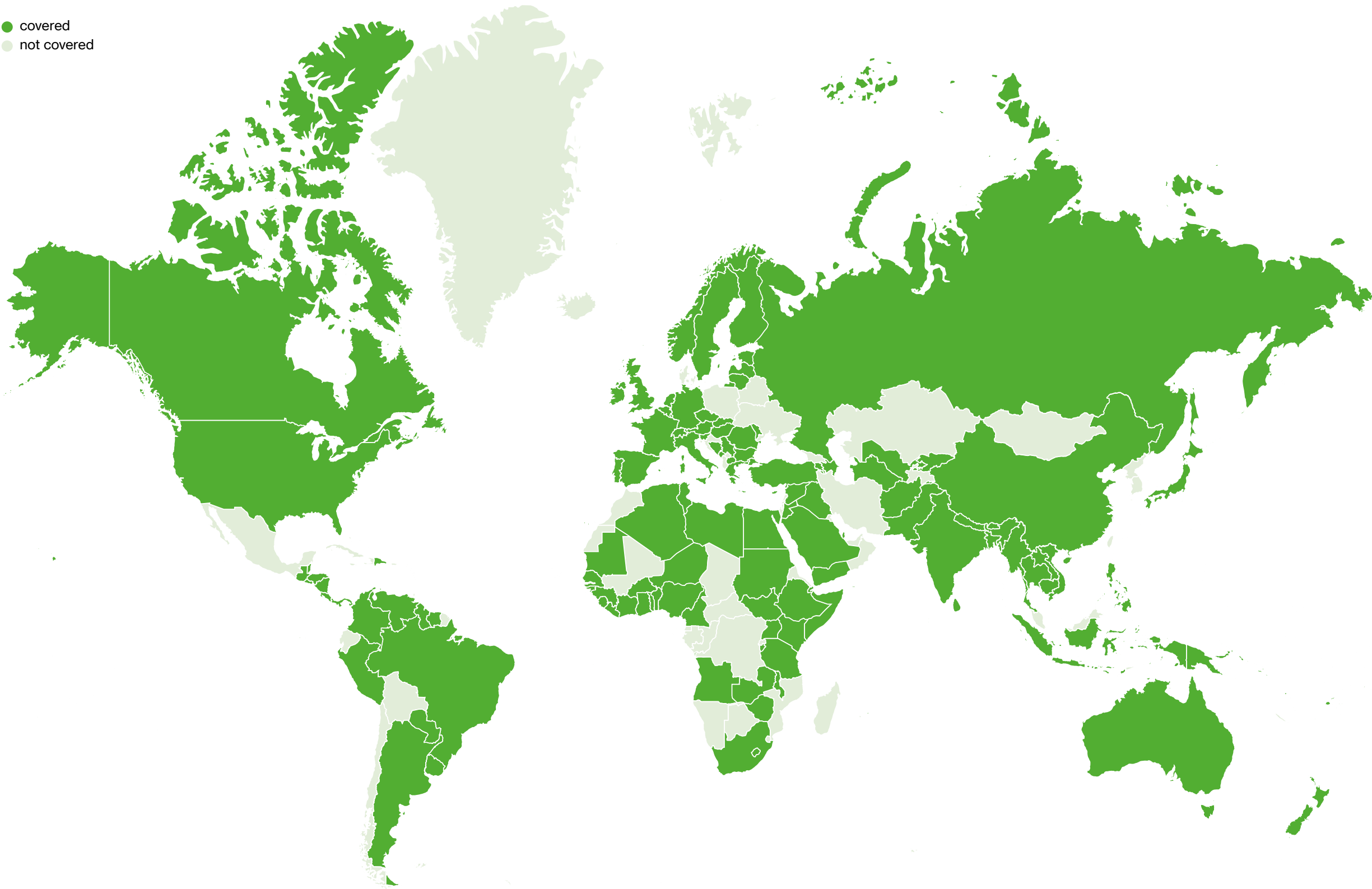
The Annex includes two tables on the Zero Project Indicators: A breakdown of all 242 analysed questionnaires and all 30 questions, and a summary of the “traffic light” answers that were given.

Find some outstanding facts here:

- The question with the most “Yes” responses (green lights): 52 percent of all respondents worldwide claim that persons with disabilities are not discriminated against in their right to marry and have children.
- At the bottom end of the table, only 3 percent of respondents believe that the public transport system in the main capital is accessible for all.
- Only 6 percent of respondents state that there is available data on the number of university graduates with disabilities.
- The same percentage claims that emergency alarm systems that are in use are accessible to everyone.
- A meagre 7 percent believe that a satisfactory system of personal assistance services is available in their country.
- Within the group of those indicators that are related to Independent Living, the “best score” is given to the availability of services and technologies, but still only with 20 percent of respondents answering “Yes.”
- Within the group of indicators related to political participation, availability of accessibility is “worst” with only 18 percent of respondents answering “Yes,” whereas 50 percent of all respondents see no discrimination in the basic right to vote and in the right to be elected (see further analysis on page 111).

All 150 countries covered by Social Indicators

- covered
- not covered



Facts, comments, and quotes from around the world

The qualitative analysis of the Social Indicators is based on a wealth of information on the situation in more than 100 countries of the world, Find a selection of interesting facts and comments here.

... ON THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (Questions 1 and 2)

Many governments – especially in the EU – have adopted measures and time frames of up to five years on average for existing buildings to be made accessible. Conflict with heritage protection legislation is often used as an excuse for not improving building accessibility (as mentioned for Estonia, Portugal, and South Africa) “All buildings built before 2002 also are under the scope of the Building Act. It is advised to renovate them as accessible as possible unless the cost is too much and unsound or if heritage protection rules forbid it.” (Estonia)

“The law applies fully to all buildings open to the public, except when the means required to implement accessibility are disproportionately difficult, or requires disproportionate economic and financial means, or when they significantly affect cultural or historical heritage. Moreover, the law is not enforced, mainly by Portuguese state.” (Portugal)

Raising awareness is considered of utmost importance: “It is only now with the ratification of the CRPD and through awareness and training sessions often organized by DPOs and organizations for people with disabilities and animated by CRPD experts that the issue of accessibility has begun in a small way to integrate into the discussions on disability.” (Benin)

... ON TRANSPORT (Question 3)

From the questionnaire responses, the current situation is particularly critical, with only 3 percent of “Yes” responses. But respondents also highlight that metros in **Greece** are 100 percent accessible. Buses in **The Netherlands** are fully accessible, while trains only partially. It is commonly observed that either only new means of transport or only certain types of transportation

are accessible. These are mainly found in urban areas, whereas suburbs, rural areas, and also smaller islands lack accessible transportation services. Alternative means of transport (for example, private vans and taxis) are not always available or are too expensive for people with disabilities.

The lack of staff training was one of the major issues reported by respondents, followed by the lack of autonomous ability to use public transport: “The Road Transport Authority has no indicator or criteria in their exam system to know the knowledge on disability of drivers.” (Salma Mahbub, Protibonhi Nagarik Shangathaner Parishad, Bangladesh)

... ON DISASTER & EMERGENCY RISK REDUCTION (Question 4)

Respondents emphasised that warning systems are often only present in public buildings, some hotels, or government buildings (such as in **Iraq**). Many comments also identified a lack of training in emergency service staff. Still, there are some good and promising practices as well, including:

Micronesia: “Just this year the first ever Federated States of Micronesia came together to develop a Platform for Disaster Risk Management to Enhancing Safety and Resilience from Disaster and Climate Change Risks.” (Nelbert Perez, President, Pohnpei Consumer Organization, Micronesia)

Barbados: The department of emergency management and the district emergency organizations work directly with DPOs and PWDs to include them in disaster and early warning system preparedness.

Belgium: The Federal Public Service Interior siren system uses a network to send alert messages to the public in a crisis situation at a nuclear or chemical site. Its new Be-Alert allows you to receive an SMS when the sirens are activated.

... ON EDUCATION Questions 7 and 8

In most countries children with disabilities cannot be legally refused an education, but they are generally directed to separate specialised schools. As a consequence, a huge proportion of children with disabilities, in particular children with other than physical disabilities, are still not integrated into the mainstream education system (e.g., The Netherlands provides no legal right for children with disabilities to attend mainstream schooling; Singapore exempts obligatory education for children with disabilities).

Some of the reasons for failing to integrate these children into mainstream education are related to the lack of resources, such as specialised training for teachers and staff. In some countries, such as **Estonia**, experts have pointed out examples where teachers are not prepared or trained to socially integrate children with disabilities, and thus are instead send to specialized schools in order to spare the children from episodes of discrimination, inaccessibility of buildings, lack of funding and resources, non-adaptable school curriculums, or lack of representation on school committees.

But there are promising practices mentioned by the experts as well: “For the first time, ‘Education Policy 2010’ has acknowledged the right to education of persons with disabilities in mainstream schools in addition to special school . . . and if any teacher refuses to admit any children with disabilities, he will be punished under this law.” (Salma Mahbub, Bangladesh) The possibility of alternative testing methods for persons with disabilities in university are generally available, such as “technology, software, allowing testing in Braille, and training of staff” (Thailand) and “special college programmes adapted to a student’s needs” (Philippines).

... ON EMPLOYMENT Questions 10, 11 and 12

The general situation related to employment issues does not show a very promising picture, with 45.2 percent of respondents giving a ‘red light’. The dire situation, especially in **Europe**, is often attributed to the economic crisis of recent years and the relative limited employment available for persons with disabilities. Budget cuts and high unemployment rates have a direct consequence on the lack of adaptations and the ethical recruitment of people with disabilities made by employers (mentioned by Portugal and Greece).

WHERE INFRASTRUCTURE IS ACCESSIBLE

Lahore, Pakistan: “Lahore has recently launched a new BRT system that is completely accessible with tactile surfacing, Braille signage, ramps and spaces allocated for wheelchair users, and LCD screens for people with hearing impairments. The same system is to be introduced in 2015 to the cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.” (Reem Khurshid, Network of Organizations Working with People with Disabilities, Pakistan)

Budapest, Hungary: “On the city’s 270 bus lines there are low-floor buses with a ramp, arriving every 30–40 minutes, which is indicated on the timetable for each bus stop. The new metro is fully accessible, as are trams Number 4 and 6, including all stops. There are also many low-floor buses with a ramp in the countryside – in towns and between towns and villages – but there should be more. The ramps, however, are not electric but are mechanical, which means the driver must get out, open the ramp, and help the person in a wheelchair to get into and from the bus.” (Eva Caesar, National Federation of Disabled Persons’ Associations, Hungary)

Solo City, Indonesia: “To enforce the national and local regulation on accessibility, many local governments set up a road map and annual budget plan to make urban/ public transports accessible for all persons with disabilities, including speech, hearing, and intellectual disabilities.” (Sunarman Sukamto, Director, CBR Development and Training Centre, Solo, Indonesia).

One of the major issues reported by many countries are the restrictions within legal frameworks in taking actions to provide reasonable accommodation for employees. For example, in **Germany** the provision of reasonable accommodation is mostly applicable only to existing employees who become disabled while on the job.

Some promising practices that are reported include early retirement (Bangladesh), employment support schemes and legal provisions applying to existing and new employees (Ireland, Norway, Peru, Philippines), or reimbursements for necessary measures taken by the Flemish government (Belgium). In **Portugal** and **Serbia** there are support schemes, incentives, and competitions for architectural adaptations according to the needs of employed persons with disabilities, reduced social security contribution rates, and salaries that can be partly supported by the state.

Social Indicators on Independent Living

Community-based services and residential care, legal and social protection, assistance and support – find the most outstanding results of the Zero Project Social Indicators on Independent Living in this section.

COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES AND RESIDENTIAL CARE

Question 21: If forms of residential care exist in your country, are there any alternatives to institutions, and do people with disabilities have choice and control over the services they use?

Question 22: If forms of residential care exist in your country, is the number of persons with disabilities living in institutional care decreasing due to the increased availability of quality services in the community that are supported and funded by the state?

Only 15.3 percent of respondents indicate the availability of community living services and alternatives to institutions, primarily due to the lack of financial resources and government austerity cuts. In the poorest countries, institutions mostly do not exist and it is only family members who provide care (mentioned in Belize, Benin, Ghana, Suriname). Alternatives might exist (as experts state for Ethiopia), but in such states most persons with disabilities still prefer to stay in institutions, which guarantees

a better standard of living than home care, and also provides more protection against discrimination.

In other countries, especially in Eastern Europe and in the states of the former Soviet Union, many institutions exist and people do not have an option but to live there, since the government does not have the capacity to provide services to the community, as explained by a respondent from Ukraine.

Budget cuts on the provision of care givers and social workers have limited the opportunity for other types of care, and as a result most respondents noted that the trend in their country is actually away from the UN CRPD and community living, and that activities sometimes are cut back to the most basic needs, such as cleaning.

Private alternatives are often available but not affordable by persons with disabilities, as governments (and private insurance schemes as well) often do not fund them (e. g., personal care assistance) or such services are not readily available: “In Flanders the personal assistance budget offers a better alternative for institutional care, but due to waiting lists there is no free choice” (Peter Lambreghts, Policy Officer and Regional Coordinator, Onafhankelijk Leven vzw/ENIL (European Network for Independent Living), Belgium – see also section on Innovative Policies).

In Estonia some people with disabilities avoid being institutionalized by sharing bigger apartments with persons that are not disabled and who are paid in return for their services. Often parents/family are full-time care givers, living only on € 19 per month since care-giving prevents them from taking jobs that are paid for. (Sven Kõllamets, , Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia – see also several Innovative Practices mentioned in this report).

Another model exists in France, where if a person with disability wishes to live autonomously, he or she can request accommodation by landlords and is “among the priority groups for the allocation of social housing. Alternatively, persons with disabilities can chose to live with host families, which are licensed professionals and controlled by the General Council (see www.seine-saint-denis.fr)

LEGAL & SOCIAL PROTECTION

Question 23: Are facilities and programs designed to serve persons with disabilities effectively monitored by independent authorities?

Question 24: Do measures and safeguards exist to ensure the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing, and housing?

In almost all countries, monitoring procedures seem not to be reliable or effective. Sunarman Sukamto, Director at CBR Development and Training Centre in Indonesia explains: “There is a national scheme for social protection with financial support of US\$ 30 per month per person, but only for persons with severe disabilities. However, the budget is too small compared to the number of persons with disabilities in Indonesia.”

In general, monitoring seems to be more common in European countries as well as in other countries with greater financial capability. Respondents from the United States point out loopholes in the legislative framework, especially regarding institutions related to health (such as psychiatric hospitals) where monitoring can only be done by health bodies that are not independent (reported as well in The Netherlands and Peru).

ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

Question 25: Is personal assistance available in your country?

Question 26: Is there public funding available to ensure that people with disabilities have access to the necessary assistive devices and technologies?

Results show that about half of all countries (45.2 percent) are currently providing personal assistance and technological devices to help persons with disability to live independently.

In many countries, however, the assistance and support is only available for certain types of disabilities (Mauritius, Moldova, Uruguay). Very often, persons

with disabilities must rely on their own ability to pay for their personal assistance and assistive devices (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Nepal, Zimbabwe).

In most countries personal assistance is limited by the availability of public funding. In Italy, for instance, “the projects that can be implemented are in fact self-managed or are indirect assistance projects, but they are always bound by available funds. It is therefore not rights based. The financial support of these projects is constantly put at risk because the funds made available are not specifically dedicated to independent living and can be absorbed by public or private structures, mainly for the elderly” (Maria Vincenza Ferrarese, President, Disabled People’s International, Italy).

In Canada individualised funding is available, but there are restrictions that include a strict assessment of people’s needs. As a consequence, “a quarter of families of children with an intellectual disability report financial difficulties in meeting household and disability-related expenses. Further, 37 percent of parents report that the services they lack are not available locally” (Tara Brinston, Canadian Association for Community Living).

Budget cuts or lack of financial resources prevent the provision of personal assistance in many countries (Ireland, Serbia, Singapore, and Slovenia have all highlighted this issue). Some comments also refer to complex administrative processes and long waiting lists lasting up to a year (Estonia, Ghana, Portugal, Senegal).

Often, new and efficient technology is not provided by government funding, but is instead provided by the private sector or by private health insurance (Canada, Germany, Hungary, United States). “A wheelchair may be available but a motorized wheelchair may not, unless the person can prove absolute inability to operate a standard wheelchair. Rarely are laptops or communication devices provided. Hearing aids and glasses may have such a high co-pay to render them inaccessible” (Frances Purdy, Director, Family Support Professional Association, United States).

In some instances assistive devices and personal assistance are only available for those living in institutions (such as South Africa). In some other cases personal assistance is limited and given only to people employed by the state (as in Ghana). Where there is not state-sponsored assistance, civil society plays an essential role. In many developing countries assistive device provision relies heavily on NGOs, volunteering, social welfare, and grassroots organizations (Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Cook Islands, Honduras, Moldova, Nigeria, Liberia).

SOCIAL INDICATORS ON INDEPENDENT LIVING: WORLDWIDE AVERAGES

	Yes	Partial	No	NA
Community based-service and alternatives to institutions (Q21/Q22)	15.2%	31.2%	25.2%	28.3%
Legal & social protection (Q23/Q24)	13.2%	53%	23.5%	10.1%
Assistance and support (Q25/Q26)	13.6%	45.2%	30.3%	10.7%

Q = Question-Number of the Zero Project Questionnaire (see Annex)

Social Indicators on Political Participation

Political rights and access to voting procedures – find summaries of the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the Social Indicators in this section.

POLITICAL RIGHTS

Question 27: Do persons with disabilities have the right to vote by secret ballot in elections?

Question 28: Do persons with disabilities have the right to stand for elections, to effectively hold office, and to perform all public functions at all levels of government?

Comments showed that in many countries there are restrictions regarding the right to vote by secret ballot in elections, especially for blind people or persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, who need to vote through their assistant – which violates their right to confidentiality (Bangladesh, Belarus,

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Kyrgyzstan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Spain, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Zimbabwe).

In some countries intellectual disability is a criteria that can affect an individual's eligibility to vote (Ivory Coast, Mauritius, Tanzania, Turkmenistan Other comments highlight that, due to stigmatisation, a person with a disability is considered unable to make decisions and, as a consequence, will have their voting rights denied (Nigeria, South Sudan).

In some countries, such as Estonia and Finland, people with an intellectual disability or limited capacity to vote (by definition, referring to people who do not understand the voting criteria) are excluded from voting, including in the United States. “The U.S. has not lifted legal restrictions on the right to vote of people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. In a majority of U.S. states, if you are under guardianship, you cannot vote. Also, in many states judges are able to take the right to vote away” (Virginia Atkinson, Access and Inclusion Specialist, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, United States).

Legal Barriers for people with intellectual disabilities also remain in Canada, India, Iraq, Ghana, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Serbia, South Africa, and Yemen, and in many other countries mentioning “sound of mind” in their constitution. Iraqi law prohibits people with disabilities to hold government positions. In Pakistan only posts such as prime minister and president are not open for people with disabilities to be elected.

There are several examples of restrictions of condition and eligibility criteria regarding the right to be elected: “For example, art. 44 of the Beninese Constitution of 11 December 1990 provides that ‘no person may be a candidate for the office of President of the Republic if he [...] does not enjoy a state of complete physical and mental well-being duly noted a panel of three sworn physicians appointed by the Constitutional Court” (Géronime Tokpo, Fédération des

SOCIAL INDICATORS ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: WORLDWIDE AVERAGES

	Yes	Partial	No	NA
Access to justice (Q5)	34.3%	32.2%	26.8%	6.6%
Political rights (Q27/Q28)	49.5%	36.3%	3.5%	10.5%
Access to voting procedures (Q29/Q30)	25.8%	37.6%	23.9%	12.6%

Q = Question-Number of the Zero Project Questionnaire (see Annex)

Associations de Personnes Handicapées du Bénin, and Member, Disabled People's International, Benin). Also, illiteracy of persons with disabilities harshly limits the capacity of persons with disabilities to vote. This is particularly so for persons with disabilities standing for elections who, in addition, are often stigmatised (Ivory Coast, Somalia).

ACCESS TO VOTING PROCEDURES

Question 29: Are reasonable accommodations available to assist voters with disabilities in voting on their own and in secret in polling stations and public spaces?

Question 30: Is the official electorate information produced by the election management body accessible to all, including those with disabilities?

Barriers related to the reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities who wish to exercise their right to vote still exist in many countries, and according to the comments they refer especially to:

- **Technology:** No available Braille ballots or sound system in electronic voting machines (Bangladesh). The technology is not always working properly (Belgium). In the Netherlands and Nigeria accommodation for blind and deaf people is limited to the use of personal assistants, thus violating the secrecy of the ballot; there are no easy-to-read or Braille ballots.
- **Reasonable accommodations for blind people:** Many countries have reported that blind voting accommodations are limited to the use of personal assistants.
- **Inaccessible infrastructures of polling centres:** Polling centre are inaccessible for wheelchair users; they often have multiple floors (Bangladesh, Tanzania, Zimbabwe).
- **Training:** Voting officers lack training to assist people with disabilities (Bangladesh). Voting is often only available in paper ballots despite the legal duty to provide alternatives, and this is obviously inaccessible to visually impaired people.

In some cases when the government does not provide accessible information, civil society organizes itself to meet this need, as in the case of Indonesia: “The election bodies organized volunteer groups to support people with disabilities to get information about elections, the procedures, the candidates, etc., and also to monitor and make notes and reports about the possible barriers faced by people with disabilities during the election. Then they conducted an evaluation and provided recommendation for the next election such that people with disabilities will get better support and accommodation”(Sunarman Sukanto, Director, CBR Development and Training Center, Solo, Indonesia).

WHAT “ELECTION CANADA” DOES TO MAKE ELECTIONS MORE ACCESSIBLE

Elections Canada offers information, education, and accessibility services to persons with special needs, seniors, and those with limited reading and writing skills. Material is available in multiple formats: large print, Braille, DVD, and CD. Services and products include:

- A polling site accessibility feedback process and special ballot (vote by mail) registration form
- A toll-free information line for those with a hearing impairment
- Documents written specifically for persons with disabilities and/or low literacy
- A sign-language DVD with open- and closed-captioning for people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- A voting template and large-print list of candidates for those with a visual impairment
- Language or sign-language interpreter services on request
- Transfer certificates on election day to permit persons who use wheelchairs or who have other physical disabilities to vote at facilities that provide level access...
- Assistance, at the voter's request, with registration and marking the ballot at the advance polls, the polling station, or the local Elections Canada office
- Transportation of the ballot box from room to room to facilitate voting in hospitals and certain residential institutions
- Mobile polling stations for certain institutions where seniors or persons with disabilities reside
- Voting at home in the presence of an electoral officer and a witness, for electors who are registered

Innovative Practices 2015 – Selection and Key Findings

Key findings

How Innovative Practices were researched and selected;
summaries and analysis

Fact Sheets

Factsheets from all Innovative Practices 2015, ranked by
country of origin

Key Findings of Innovative Practices

ZERO PROJECT 2015

This year the Zero Project selected 39 Innovative Practices that positively impact the rights of persons with disabilities to live independently and/or support their political rights. The Zero Project uses a clear definition of “Innovative Practice” (and “Innovative Policy” as well, as noted in the next chapter), and has developed a unique approach involving hundreds of experts worldwide in a kind of “crowd intelligence” methodology.

The Best Practice/Innovative Practice approach

According to wikipedia.org, a “Best Practice” is a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is used as a benchmark. Eugen Bardach, in A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis, notes the criteria that define Best Practices, saying that they:

- Identify clear and concrete behaviour
- Solve a problem or achieve a goal
- Are cost-efficient

The “Best” in “Best Practices,” however, connotes that those practices (projects, methods, techniques, models, social enterprises, etc.) are “as good as it can get.” Taking into account that the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) is still in its early stages and is an ongoing process that will continue for many years, the Zero Project has chosen instead to use the term “Innovative Practice” (and “Innovative Policy”).

Social innovation is needed to create the change that the implementation of the UN CPRD requires. And social innovation is a complex process that involves various decision-makers and stakeholders; and that takes notoriously long, since it has to break down various barriers in organizations, regulations, and particularly popular opinion. The process of innovation can, however, be accelerated; or sometimes it can only start when existing solutions from other contexts are used as prototypes that are studied and adjusted to the local context.

Innovative Practices are very hard to find and identify, but they are among the most important tools to accelerate the innovation process that is necessary for the implementation of the UN CRPD. Governments in more than 150 countries that have now ratified the UN CRPD, as well as service providers and all other stakeholders, are constantly on the lookout for “models that work.”

The Zero Project’s goal is precisely to identify those working models. It has developed a system whereby experts, including a high percentage of persons with disabilities themselves, decide on what is (or would be) a better practice, based on their personal knowledge and experience. This approach is in line with many scholars who work in the area of justice and human rights. Amartya Sen, for example, states in The Idea of Justice that “Justice-enhancing changes or reforms demand comparative assessments, not simply an immaculate identification of ‘the just society’ (or ‘the just institutions’).”

“Crowd intelligence”: Engaging a worldwide network

The Zero Project has developed its own unique way to identify Innovative Practices: It engages its full network of experts in the nomination, evaluation, and

selection process. In 2014 more than 2,000 persons and organizations from almost every country of the world were approached to nominate practices, projects, models, social enterprises, etc. In the following steps, specific experts were engaged in commenting on and evaluating the nominated practices, with more than 100 taking part in the final selection process. The Zero Project, thus, can also be considered a system of “crowd intelligence,” whereby hundreds of experts worldwide contribute pieces (“Lego® like”) to jointly create the set of Innovative Practices. In this way, these experts are global leaders in implementing the UN CRPD, and particularly in the area of this year’s Project theme: “Independent Living and Political Participation.”

Using its methodology, the Zero Project research also takes into consideration the fact that Innovative Practices are highly dependent on context: What is outstanding in Sweden may be very relevant to other countries of the European Union, but may not be useful in South Asia. An Innovative Practice of Rwanda may be highly relevant to many other sub-Saharan countries, but not to other parts of the world. By engaging experts from all over the world, and by observing a quota of at least a third of experts and selected Practices from the global South, a variety of Innovative Practices with worldwide relevance has been produced.

The nomination and selection process

- In May–June 2014 a call for nominations was made to more than 2,000 experts and organizations of the Zero Project network, using a nomination form that was available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish (all nomination forms were and still are downloadable from the Zero Project website). The nomination forms in English and German were also available in plain language versions.
- Everyone was entitled to nominate every project that in their opinion fit the criteria, including one’s own projects.
- Several organizations that themselves have a large membership or network of experts where encouraged to forward the nomination forms within their networks. We are thankful in this respect to, among several others, DPI, RIADIS, GAATES, Ashoka, Light for the World, Lebenshilfe (Inclusion International), Diakonie, Caritas, ENIL, Human Rights Watch, and IFES.
- 231 nominations from 58 countries were received in June and July 2014.
- Initially, the Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies were separated, and the latter were researched by the World Future Council subgroup, using a similar and parallel procedure (see next chapter).

INNOVATIVE PRACTICE AND INNOVATIVE POLICY

The Zero Project draws a clear line in its research process between “Innovative Practices” and “Innovative Policies,” based on the belief that they represent two very different approaches, but that both have the ability to create change:

- **Innovative Practices:** Operational projects or organizations, mostly started by civil society or businesses. The research of Innovative Practices is inspired by the “Ashoka – Innovators for the Public” approach (www.ashoka.org) for searching social entrepreneurs that have already proven their ability to create change. The Zero Project approach and criteria were developed together with the Ashoka organization.
- **Innovative Policies:** A law, regulation, standard, action plan, programme, etc., issued by government, parliament, or public administration at any governance level. The research of Innovative Policies is inspired and undertaken by the World Future Council’s “Future Just Lawmaking Methodology.”

- In a first step of the shortlisting process those nominations were discarded that did not meet the formal criteria, e.g., projects that did not work on Independent Living or Political Participation issues or that could not give any evidence of their work or impact.
- In a second stage of shortlisting, a key expert group was asked to comment on all the remaining nominations, especially on their potential impact, on their innovation factor, and on their conformity with the UN CRPD.
- Based on these comments, 84 nominations were shortlisted as Innovative Practices, considering also a minimum quota for nominations from the global South.
- All shortlisted nominations where, in a third step, clustered into three groups, including one group on global South-only practices. Factsheets were sent out to a total of 600 experts, who were asked to vote for the “better 50 percent” of practices, according to their own experience and knowledge, again taking into account a quota for experts from the global South.
- A total of 102 experts worldwide voted within the three groups, and based on the “Better 50 percent” principle a list of 42 Innovative Practices was established. The Zero Project analysts contacted their representatives, did further research, and produced the fact sheets that are published in this report and on the Project website.

WHAT ARE INNOVATIVE PRACTICES?

Innovative Practices of the Zero Project are projects, programmes, social enterprises, etc. that:

- are creative, professional, successful, and scalable
- can be transferred or copied to other countries/regions/contexts and have a measurable impact
- speed up the process of implementing the UN CPRD

- In the process of final research, three more Practices were discarded because they did not respond to requests from Zero Project staff or their information could not be verified. Consequently, the final list of “Innovative Practices of the Zero Project 2015 on Independent Living and Political Participation” is exactly 39 entries long.

Themes of the 39 Innovative Practices

The 39 Innovative Practices have origins in 26 countries (plus one on the level of the European Union) and from all six continents. Countries represented most often are:

- United Kingdom: 4
- Belgium: 3
- Germany: 3
- South Africa: 3

The themes of these Innovative Practices can be clustered as follows:

Assistance and budget

Several Innovative Practices have developed models on how to organize and finance personal assistance, and how to organize personal budget models, where financial support is given to persons with disabilities themselves and not to service providers. In the “employer model,” for example, the person with a disability is the employer of her or his assistant(s), and an organization hired by that individual then provides all the services that are needed.

Community living

A larger group of Innovative Practices has developed models of community living, where persons with disabilities, including those with intellectual and multiple disabilities, have a real possibility to choose where to live and with whom, which is a prerequisite for deinstitutionalisation and a clear requirement of the UN CRPD. Some of these Innovative Practices, for example, use apartment sharing, “Microboards,” and create affordable and efficient support systems for families and care givers.

Peer-support

Some practices work especially on peer-support, using the capabilities of persons with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties. Their first-hand experience and knowledge of many societal issues enables them to be experts in their field. Peer support includes training and teaching models, and it also creates jobs and new professions.

Self-empowerment

A group of Innovative Practices concentrate on the empowerment of persons with disabilities, training

them in communication, literacy, etc. Others initiate and support groups of self-representatives and/or work on self-representation and access to justice. Quite outstanding work is done by those Innovative Practices that support groups of persons with disabilities that are even more vulnerable, e.g., deaf women in male dominated societies or victims of sexual abuse.

Participation in society and politics

Combining issues of Independent Living and Political Participation, several Innovative Practices train persons with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties, in self-representation towards administrations, service providers, etc. Such Practices often include political participation so that the voices of persons with disabilities are heard in the media, in political consultations, in public speeches, and/or in consultation processes for new regulations. Some even work towards preparing persons with disabilities to run for political office.

Accessible elections

A very distinct group works on the accessibility of elections for all, which includes election tools (e.g., Braille ballots and election materials), training for election staff, physical accessibility at voting places, access to information on elections, etc.

THE ZERO PROJECT AUSTRIA INNOVATIVE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- In 2014–2015 the Zero Project conducted research on Innovative Practices and Policies that has special relevance to Austria – the home country of the Zero Project. In a separate research stage, all short-listed nominations were voted for exclusively by Austrian experts in order to identify those that are most relevant for the Austrian context.
- The “Zero Project Austria” is published in a separate report and on its own website. It is also the topic of its own conferences, which are held nationally as part of the international Zero Project Conference in Vienna as well as in nine more conferences in the capital cities of the Austrian country states. Zero Project Austria 2014–2015 is co-funded by the PROGRESS Programme of the European Union.

Regional network to promote legal capacity of people with psychosocial disabilities

ARGENTINA (AND OTHERS) / THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS

Funded by the Open Society Institute, the project seeks to establish a network of five countries to promote and raise awareness of the legal capacities of persons with psychosocial disabilities through workshops and monitoring.

Problems targeted

Persons with psychosocial disabilities are systematically denied their right to recognition as persons before the law and their right to legal capacity by their own countries’ civil codes. The Trust for the Americas works to raise awareness about Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which recognizes those rights.

The project raises awareness about the rights of people with psychosocial disabilities to be recognized as persons before the law and their right to legal capacity, which leads to greater self-empowerment.

Felipe RAMOS, Technical Coordinator,
The Trust for the Americas

Solution & Methodology

The project was launched in two phases. The first phase (January–April 2012) focused on mapping the state of affairs of the Legal Capacity of Persons with Psychosocial Disabilities in six countries: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru. During the second phase (November 2012–December 2013) a series of workshops was held in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru to provide participants with a solid understanding of disability paradigms, the CRPD, and specific situations identified during the mapping.

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Members of the Peruvian justice system attend a project workshop at the Congress of the Republic of Peru.

Outlook & Transferability

To ensure the continued impact and legacy of the project, a Network of Organizations and Individuals with Psychosocial Disabilities was created to monitor the legal and practical aspects of the implementation of CRPD, and to advocate for the rights of the people with psychosocial disabilities. The project can also be transferred and replicated in other countries, following the guidelines found in the Trust’s Legal Capacity Advocacy Toolbox.

FACTS & FIGURES

- 10 multisector, knowledge-sharing, and strategy-planning workshops were held in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru.
- 5 workshops were directed to members of the justice sector and 5 to civil society leaders from organizations of persons with psychosocial disabilities.
- A total of 355 key stakeholders were trained during the workshops.

Individual Supported Living in Australia

AUSTRALIA / SCHOOL OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND SOCIAL WORK

From the outset, this research project closely involved all key stakeholders, including people with disabilities, family members, policy makers, and service providers. Their knowledge and experiences developed the guidelines that will provide the opportunity for many people to deepen their understanding of “Individual supported living” (ISL). The project focused on adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities, but the guidelines adopted principles with universal application to the provision of supported living to other vulnerable groups, including other expressions of disability, elderly people, and people with mental illness.

Problems targeted

Australian policy and practice support people with disabilities to live in their own home in the community, but a substantial proportion live in large, formal, congregate care settings. In 2011–2012, 63 percent of people with disabilities who received government funding lived in private residences, frequently with an ageing parent, thus foreshadowing substantial demand for supported living - the highest growth area of government-funded services.

project have developed a descriptive framework of ISL and then operationalized that framework into a set of guidelines to evaluate the quality of ISL arrangements. The third stage of the project, which began in November 2014, has now been funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant, and will explore how high quality ISL arrangements contribute to social and economic participation and relationships. It will also gather information on formal and informal costs of ISL options and on decision pathways that led to their adoption.

Outlook & Transferability

In Australia and several other countries services have developed in recent years that focus primarily or even entirely on ISL alternatives. The emphasis of ISL is cost-effectiveness in providing alternatives that support rights and choice and reflect fidelity to an explicit set of underpinning principles. The project has particular relevance in Australia, which has begun to implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Based on a model of social insurance, the Scheme provides direct funding to people with disabilities and their families based on choice and control, which undoubtedly will accelerate the take-up of ISL options.

Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement.

Article 19 of the UN CRPD Optional Protocol

Solution & Methodology

The research project uses the term “individual supported living” (ISL) to define a situation in which a person with a disability is provided with the support necessary for him/her to live in their own home of their own choosing. Consistent with Article 19 of the Optional Protocol of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, the project is based on the assumptions that all people with the right supports can live in an ISL arrangement, they do not have to live alone or be “fully independent,” and they do not have to live with other people with disabilities unless it is their choice. Beginning in 2008, using qualitative methods that involved key stakeholders including people with disabilities, the first two stages of this

Voting independently and privately

AUSTRALIA / SCYTL SECURE ELECTRONIC VOTING, S.A.

eVoting improves voter access for the visually impaired as well as for the illiterate, those who cannot read English, and citizens living abroad. Voters with visual impairments have the option of using an audio device at an election kiosk or casting their votes by phone.

Problems targeted

Prior to this project visually impaired voters were unable to vote in private, as they required the assistance of a sighted person.

This project was a trial of an eVoting solution to bring the privacy and security of voting to visually impaired voters.

Sam CAMPBELL, Operations Manager, Asia Pacific, Scytl

Solution & Methodology

The Victorian Electoral Commission implemented measures to allow visually impaired citizens to vote on an equal basis with their peers: independently, privately, and with the highest security standards. The voting software was customized to support 12 languages, and included several zoom and contrasting options on the kiosk screen and an audio interface. It also offered such additional features as headphones and a specially selected keyboard. In addition to the technology, Scytl Secure Electronic Voting, S.A. customized the voting system, provided training materials for poll workers and election officials, and completed the on-site support during the election.

Outlook & Transferability

In cooperation with Scytl and Hewlett Packard Australia, the voting system was expanded in terms of functionality, voting channels (including phone voting), and geographical reach (including Victorian citizens residing in the UK or in other Australian states). The state of New South Wales (Australia) and the state of Gujarat (India) have already contracted Scytl to improve their voter accessibility. The Victorian projects were run as trials and supported by legislation. Moving beyond the trial status is expected to increase awareness of the solution via media outreach.



In the elections of 2014, the City of Toronto offers voters with disabilities Scytl's solutions for internet and telephone voting

FACTS & FIGURES

- In the 2006 trial, the first of its kind in Victoria, 6 voting 'super centres' were set up to host 36 electronic voting terminals.
- In 2010 the system was enhanced to support the use of 12 languages and deployed to 101 early voting centres.
- For the 2010 state election the Victorian Electoral Commission set up over 250 internet-linked phones at 101 locations.

Competition among students for innovative devices and software

AUSTRIA / UNIKATE

UNIKATE is a competition among a wide variety of students to solve every-day problems of persons with disabilities and the elderly. UNIKATE's mission is to use the creative potential of these students to invent tools and devices that support the specific needs of these persons, with the goal of constructing prototypes of the most promising ideas.

Problems targeted


Technical innovations play a decisive role in supporting persons with disabilities to lead a full and independent life, but unfortunately persons with disabilities are seldom the target group of technology and software development. Thus, there is an urgent need for awareness-raising and innovation in this area.

UNIKATE brings together the individual needs of disabled persons and creativity of university students to find solutions to specific personal problems.

Irmgard BAUER, Project Coordinator

Solution & Methodology

The idea is to combine the innovation, creativity, and technical knowhow of university students with the individual needs of people with disabilities and the elderly, thereby creating a win-win situation for everyone involved. Students are supported by their teachers up to the implementation stage. The submitted ideas are evaluated by a body of experts and nominated for support in the form of prize money, which is paid out in two parts: the first part as recognition for the idea, the second after a successful implementation. School and university students receive support from AAT and ÖAR upon completion of their work. UNIKATE is organized by Österreichische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Rehabilitation (ÖAR); TU Wien, Institut für Gestaltungs- und Wirkungsforschung (IGW);

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The photo shows the practical application of Handcam, a 2011 competition winner.

Zentrum für Angewandte Assistierende Technologien (AAT); and UNIQA Insurance Group.

Outlook & Transferability

The concept of organizing student competitions can be developed in several different ways and in virtually any institution, and it can be done in a cost-effective manner with the help of outside support.

FACTS & FIGURES

- In 2014 the third annual UNIKATE competition was held.
- A total of 16 projects have been nominated over the three competitions.
- 5 prizes have been awarded for the reduction of prototypes, none of which were already on the market.

“Proefwonen” – fast access to affordable homes

BELGIUM (FLANDERS) / WOONWINKEL ZENNEVALLEI

Through Proefwonen, housing and social service providers collaborate to facilitate rental access for people with intellectual disabilities and/or mental health problems. Rather than having to register for housing on the regular social-service waiting list, Proefwonen allows these clients to apply for faster access to an affordable home. A steering group matches available housing with the candidate-tenants through a consensus process. The project has also resulted in a number of adaptations to the legal framework in Flanders, lifting legal barriers for intersectional collaboration.


Problems targeted

- Proefwonen aims to address several difficulties that hinder successful cooperation between welfare and social rental services:
- the unpredictable timing associated with the waiting lists of social housing services can hinder the smooth transition of a person with intellectual and/or psychological problems from an institutional setting to an independent life with support;
 - there are few options to ‘try out’ independent living and to take a step back, if necessary – two conditions for de-institutionalization;
 - housing providers are faced with vulnerable clients, but do not have the means to support them. In some cases, this may lead to eviction.

Inclusion of persons with intellectual disability and/or mental health needs in rented housing can only be accomplished by adopting a multilateral consultation model between care and housing providers. To match a certain individual with a certain house requires careful consideration.

Solution & Methodology

The social housing provider informs the welfare partners when a house is available for the project,

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FACTS & FIGURES

- 24 candidate-tenants have entered the program over a period of three years. More than 5 percent of the approximate 450 total local allocated homes were reserved for persons with intellectual and/or mental health issues.
- 11 program participants have been interviewed about their experiences and each one has evaluated their new living environment positively.

sharing information on the characteristics of the home and the living environment. After a process of exploring the housing and support needs of a client, a care provider can register the client for the project. The matching process is performed in consensus by a local, intersectorial steering committee. Accepting support is a condition of participation in this program. One of the key features of the project is the possibility it offers to people with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities/learning difficulties and/or mental health problems to move from residential care to independent living.

Outlook & Transferability

Following a positive evaluation of the project in the city of Halle, the regional Flemish government is developing a legal framework for its structural implementation. This legal framework also encourages other cities throughout Flanders to take similar initiatives. Because the homes available for the project were part of the existing housing capacity of the social housing providers, project costs were limited to additional administrative time (internal staff costs) and facilitation of the experimental procedures (paid for by a grant by the Flemish government).

Training for an active role in society

BELGIUM (FLANDERS) / ONAFHANKELIJK LEVEN VZW

Freedom School is a five-day training course for people with disabilities. This interactive summer course with 18 disabled participants (plus personal assistants) focused on developing talents and skills for self-advocacy and implementing personal projects that can contribute to the better participation and self-determination of people with disabilities. The aims of this training are to strengthen the Independent Living movement by attracting more volunteers/activists, to improve the skills and capacities of current volunteers, and to create future leaders.

Problems targeted

Because people with disabilities often do not get the same opportunities as others, the focus of the training course is on learning about and discovering the talents of the disabled, and developing these talents. Following the training, participants play an active role in public life and have the skills to organize their own projects independently, creating a positive impact and greater societal awareness regarding the needs and abilities of disabled people.

After five days of Freedom School I am so full of energy and ready to go home for action! The group feeling was great and the support we got from Onafhankelijk Leven was amazing.

Project participant

Solution & Methodology

The philosophy behind the Freedom School training course is to let the participants see that they can make a real difference in their community. Building confidence and experiencing personal success with self-chosen projects is facilitated, such that the trainees come to see themselves not just as participants, volunteers, or clients but as real experts and future leaders. They have the responsibility to realize change in society.

Outlook & Transferability

The Freedom School concept can easily be copied and adjusted to local differences and preferences

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Trainees come to see themselves not just as participants, volunteers, or clients but as real experts and future leaders.

(e.g. the specific expectations and knowledge level of participants). Costs depend mostly on the availability of accessible accommodation and external trainers. Cost efficiency: The training gives social return in improving inclusion, strengthening the IL movement and delivering future leaders.

FACTS & FIGURES

- 18 people have completed the training.
- 5 self-chosen projects have been created and are being followed-up.
- 7 participants are now volunteers at Onafhankelijk Leven vzw, some of whom are active as ambassadors of the organization. As such, they represent the organization at various external meetings and are the core of the volunteer force.

Stimulating political participation for persons with an intellectual disability

BELGIUM (FLANDERS) – OUR NEW FUTURE

Self-advocates of Our New Future explore the possibilities and barriers to participating in local and regional political meetings. They identify existing barriers to their political participation.. Self-advocates and advisors work both on accessibility of the intellectually disabled in the political process and on tools to support the councils, policy bodies, and advisors to better provide support for their participation.

Problems targeted

Research showed that no people with an ID were participating politically in Flanders, and there was a profound interest in addressing this shortcoming. The Flemish governmental organization for equal opportunities wanted to involve people with an ID in decisions concerning their lives and their environment, and urged ONT to do something with the results of their research. ONT then identified 10 people with an ID who had a powerful desire to participate in the policy of their own city. During the first year, however, it became clear that there was a mismatch between the desires of the persons and the expectations of participation (vocabulary, long hours that would undermine their focus, the need for a lot of preparation, difficult subject matter, etc.), and that more had to be done.

We want to make decisions or to participate in making those decisions. In that way we keep control over our own life. We find it important that people listen to us as well.

Stan, program participant

Solution & Methodology

Our New Future (ONT), a self-advocacy movement for people with an intellectual disability (ID), set out to evaluate the proper level of support for people with an ID: Where did they want to participate? How could they enter the process? What was necessary in order for them to follow the meetings? Once entered into the process, it was very important to follow them to

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FACTS & FIGURES

- Whereas there were no persons with an ID participating in policy making in Flanders four years ago, today there are 11.
- Much effort has been put into awareness-raising through the concrete documentation of the various political trajectories of people with ID: booklets, a film, a game, and other public materials
- 117 participants attended a day-long meeting to review the ONT results for 2013.

see how their participation could be improved. ONT collected stories of people with an ID in order to dispel prejudices and stereotypes concerning their political participation. At the same time, self-advocates identified the thresholds that people with an ID encounter. ONT offers concrete tools and information addressing both the strengths and weaknesses of political participation for people with an ID, for policy makers, and for professionals and organizations who work with people with intellectual disabilities.

Outlook & Transferability

People with an intellectual disability who have participated in the project have grown in confidence and have developed a stronger self-image. This at first appeared to be a slow and challenging process, but – taking into account the strength that people with an intellectual disability have demonstrated – effective and long-term development is in sight. It has also been noticed that policy participation is an individual process, different for each person. The whole process demands personalized support for every person with an intellectual disability from his or her ONT advisor and from the councils or policy bodies where they participate.

Microboards: Small non-profits for supported decision-making

CANADA/BRITISH COLUMBIA / VELA MICROBOARD ASSOCIATION

A Microboard is a small group of family and friends who join a person with disabilities to create a non-profit organization so as to support the person to create the life he or she envisions. The network enhances supports that may previously have been solely the responsibility of parents or other relatives.

Problems targeted

In the late 1980s British Columbia was a leader for deinstitutionalization in Canada. However, a sizable number of people with complex disabilities remained in institutions, as it was widely believed they could not live successfully within a community setting. This did not deter their families and friends from advocating for their return to community living.

Microboards are ensuring that persons with disabilities can lead a good and fulfilling life.

Linda PERRY, Executive Director, Vela Canada

Solution & Methodology

Vela created a process for their agency to engage with and assist disabled individuals, their families, and Microboards. Some assisted people cannot use speech to communicate, and Microboard members commit to helping them to communicate their needs and wishes to the community. Microboards meet together to learn with and from each other, discuss their respective processes, and support one another. If Microboard members provide services for a fee, they work with funders to do so.

Outlook & Transferability

The concept of the Microboard has proven to be very successful, and is currently working well in several countries – in communities large, small, and even remote. It is easily transferable due to a clear philosophy and set of guidelines that are freely accessible. Vela is prepared to provide assistance and consultancy on how to set up such a support organization.



Microboards make an important difference by supporting people with disabilities through family and friends to lead self-directed lives. Also see the story of Bree-Anna on page 13

FACTS & FIGURES

- As of September 2014 more than 900 active Microboards were set up in British Columbia.
- There are currently over 4,500 voluntary Microboard members.
- Over the past 15 years Vela has supported Microboard development in 3 other provinces of Canada and 4 other countries.
- Velaboards have also been implemented in Australia, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and the United States.

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Voting without legal capacity

CROATIA / ASSOCIATION FOR SELF ADVOCACY

Human Rights Advocacy through Learning by Doing is a successful advocacy project for legislature change that promotes the right to vote for persons deprived of their legal capacity. Project activities were carried out using a networking advocacy approach, which included wide cooperation with other self-advocate groups, members of the Croatian self-advocacy network, relevant state institutions, the academic community, the media, and Platform 112 – Croatia’s largest civil society network.

Problems targeted

According to data from the national Disability Ombudsman, there are more than 19,000 persons deprived of legal capacity in Croatia, of whom some 16,000 are completely deprived of their legal capacity. Other targeted problems that have impeded the active participation of persons with intellectual disabilities in political and public life are the lack of accessible, easy-to-read information on election procedures and candidates’ programs, and public prejudice that views people with intellectual disability as incapable of participation in democratic processes.

By the end of 2012 the combined efforts of the Association for Self-Advocacy, the organization GONG, and Platform 112 resulted in a change in the Voters Register Act making it possible for more than 16,000 Croatian citizens who are fully deprived of their legal capacity to realize their active voting right.

Mr. Damjan JANJUŠEVIĆ, Association for Self Advocacy

Solution & Methodology

The main objectives realized by the project were making changes to the Voters Register Act, which now provides persons with intellectual disabilities with the right to vote, and raising public awareness. The project brought together self-advocates and a variety of civil society organizations to raise public aware-

ness on the rights of persons with disabilities among the general population and to provide workshops on democratic and voting procedures for self-advocates in local communities.

Outlook & Transferability

The project provides an innovative and successful example of inclusive practice in advocating for legislature changes and the public promotion of the right to vote for persons with intellectual disabilities. As such, the project methodologies, expertise, and experience gained – and the principle of inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities in carrying out the advocacy activities – is fully transferable and applicable to any other social or societal contexts. The project of course incurred implementation costs, but it imposed no additional costs for the state or any other institution or organization.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Since the new Voters Register Act came into effect, persons with intellectual disabilities have successfully voted on local and regional elections and two state referendums.
- Self-advocacy groups from 14 local communities that are members of the Croatian self-advocacy network as well as people in two residential institutions were educated on their democratic rights, including their right to vote, and were provided with the necessary knowledge to participate in political and public life. More than 600 persons have received training on voting procedures and participation in public and political life.
- Public awareness on the right to vote for persons deprived of their legal capacity was raised via a broad public TV and radio campaign.

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Living alone with individualized support

CROATIA (ZAGREB) / ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING INCLUSION (API)

The Association for Promoting Inclusion (API) is a non-governmental organization established in 1997 in Zagreb, Croatia. Its mission is to promote the development of a society in which people with intellectual disabilities have equal opportunities, their contributions are valued, and their human rights are respected. The focus of API's work has been to develop models of community-based services, such as supported housing and specialized foster family care, to enable children and adults with intellectual disabilities to move from large residential institutions to a life in the community.

Problems targeted


Traditionally, persons with intellectual disabilities have been placed in institutions without their consent and without respect for their personal needs and desires. Instead, parents, social workers, and other professionals have made decisions on their behalf. In general, these institutions have been violating the basic human rights of people with disabilities, keeping them isolated, segregated, and stigmatized.

Our mission is to promote the development of a society in which people with intellectual disabilities have equal opportunities, their contributions are valued, and their human rights are respected.

Prof. Borka TEODORVIĆ, President, API

Solution & Methodology

API offers supported housing services to persons with intellectual disabilities in rented apartments. In 2000, API negotiated the recognition of supported housing as a social welfare service for persons with intellectual disabilities, and identified a loophole in the Social Welfare Law that enabled it to register its program as a residential institution offering services in the community. In 2003 the law was amended, and 'organized housing' was introduced as a new type of service. In 2008 the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth developed the regulatory mechanism for organized housing, and API has continued to provide services, including employment and volunteering activities.

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FACTS & FIGURES

- Established community-based supported housing services for 250 people with intellectual disabilities in 8 cities in Croatia.
- Supported work activities and day programs for over 150 people in 8 cities.

Outlook & Transferability

Over the years API has strived to increase the capacity for community-based service in Croatia and in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. To date, it has supported the establishment of subsidiaries in several cities in Croatia and has shared its models of community-based services with organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Macedonia.



API offers supported housing services to persons with intellectual disabilities in rented apartments.

Study kit about citizenship and personal rights

DENMARK / NATIONAL BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES (SOCIALSTYRELSEN)

The study kit is an educational program for people with cognitive disabilities to acquire knowledge about citizenship and personal rights. The objective of the program is to develop and test methods, tools, and information materials that provide people within the target group with knowledge of their personal rights, and to give the target group concrete tools for practicing these rights.

Problems targeted


The project focuses on improving the chances of people with cognitive disabilities to live an independent life and contribute to a democratic society on equal terms with others. This is achieved by developing and testing methods, tools, and information materials that provide people within the target group with knowledge of their personal rights and by giving them concrete tools for practicing these rights.

The study kit contributes to giving people with cognitive disabilities the opportunity to acquire knowledge of citizenship and personal rights, as well as concrete tools for exercising citizenship by participating in society and democracy.

Socialstyrelsen

Solution & Methodology

The program takes into account the specific cognitive educational needs of the individual and provides educators with the tools for teaching the target group. Exercises are based on activities, pictures, role-playing, and visits, making the themes recognizable and part of the participants' daily life. The aim is to provide participants with increased knowledge as well as an opportunity to practice the use of this knowledge. The colors red, yellow, and green are used to mark and illustrate different levels of decision-making.

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FACTS & FIGURES

- The study kit has been developed in collaboration with educational institutions and has been tested by approx. 150 young people and adults.
- The kit has been presented to 320 leaders and professionals within the field, and information has been sent to all national municipalities and relevant professionals throughout the country.

Educators work with the participants also beyond the four-week program.

Outlook & Transferability

Based on positive experiences with the study kit, a project has been initiated in 2014 to extend access to the kit to a wider target group of adults with more severe cognitive disabilities. This project will test and spread out an adjusted kit 10 municipalities. Kit materials are compiled in various formats that make it possible for the individual educator to further specify the materials for his or her participants.



Example from the study kit

Diverting EU funds towards community-based care

EUROPEAN UNION / EUROPEAN EXPERT GROUP (EEG)

The European Expert Group (EEG) includes a wide range of stakeholders, providing training, guidance, and tools to EU officials, political representatives, and governments to inform them about the need of community-based care and the risks of institutional care for persons with disabilities. It has been initiated jointly by Lumos Foundation, European Disability Forum (EDF), Eurochild, Metal Health Europe, Inclusion Europe, UNHCHR, UNICEF, European Network for Independent Living (ENIL), European Social Network, and Coface.

Problems targeted


More than 1 million children and adults live in institutions in the European Union. Evidence shows that institutional care leads to social exclusion, segregation, and can negatively affect brain development in very young children. The EU plays an important role in shaping social policy within Europe through the provision of several funds, which need to be diverted from institutional care to community/family-based services.

The EEG’s unique collaborative approach was instrumental in convincing the EU to put a stop to its funds being used on harmful institutions.

Georgette MULHEIR, Chief Executive, Lumos Foundation

Solution & Methodology

The EEG was established to support the EU in promoting care reform across Europe. It provides guidance and tools, raising awareness and lobbying for the regulation of the EU’s €367 million structural and investment funds in order to divert them away from institutions and towards family-based care. The Expert Group consists of organizations representing children, families, persons with disabilities, persons with mental health problems, public and non-profit service providers, public authorities, and international non-governmental organizations. EEG activities have resulted in more people with disabilities accessing basic and universal services in their own communities, and in EU officials and governments of EU members being more aware of the vulnerabilities of people with disabilities.

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Outlook & Transferability

The success achieved in the EU has initiated a process of review by the United States, World Bank, and other international donors to explore how they can ensure that their own funds are used appropriately with regard to institutionalisation. The EEG guidelines and toolkit provide a model for other types of donors related to the eradication of institutional care. Currently, the EEG is exploring with the European Foundation Centre and others if revised versions tailored to private trusts and other grant-giving bodies would be useful.



Common European Guidelines on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care

FACTS & FIGURES

- The program was established in 2009 by the then Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, Vladimir Špidla.
- A program report published in 2009 highlighted the problem of institutional care.
- Guidelines and a toolkit were created in 2012, providing practical advice on promoting the transition from institutional to community-based care.
- Materials have been translated into 14 languages and disseminated in every EU country and in Brussels.

Providing accessible candidate lists for visually impaired persons

FINLAND / FINNISH FEDERATION OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED (FFVI)

During the Finnish parliamentary elections in 2011 the Ministry of Justice, in cooperation with the Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (FFVI), for the first time financed the production of accessible candidate lists for visually impaired persons, including audio and Braille. The Ministry also funded the production of other accessible election-related materials, such as information on voting procedures. The FFVI was responsible for the production and distribution of all accessible materials.

Problems targeted

Prior to 2011 the list of candidate in Finnish elections were not accessible to everyone, as they were only published in print or on the Internet.

The voting experience should be independent, from beginning to end.


Maria FINSTRÖM, Organization Secretary, Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired

Solution & Methodology

The practice of producing candidate lists in audio and Braille formats is a simple way to significantly enhance the political participation of visually impaired people. The visually impaired have been directly involved in both the planning and implementation of the project, as the FFVI has been responsible for the project’s practical work.

Outlook & Transferability

Depending on the election system, the practice is easily transferable to other countries. Notably, the Finnish Ministry of Justice deems this a cost-efficient practice.

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A voter reads a list of candidates in Braille.

FACTS & FIGURES

- In 2014 the Ministry produced 13,500 lists in audio format and 250 in Braille.
- Since 2011 these visual aids have been available in every election on all levels in Finland.

Guidelines for accessible elections in Europe

FRANCE/CZECH REPUBLIC/UNITED KINGDOM (SCOTLAND) – INCLUSION EUROPE

The Accommodating Diversity for Active Participation in European Elections (ADAP) project tries to overcome the voting obstacles faced by people with intellectual disabilities and older people by raising awareness about this problem at both the national and European level. The project outcomes include developing recommendations for accessible elections in Europe – in both regular and easy-to-read versions in 21 languages – covering legislation on legal capacity, accessible information, training, support for decision-making in voting, and access to the voting process.

Problems targeted

People with intellectual, sensory, or physical disabilities as well as older people are often excluded from voting processes due to a lack of accessibility. Moreover, through targeted questionnaires, Inclusion Europe discovered that this is a problem, of which many European politicians are unaware, and thus take no steps in addressing. Furthermore, these groups lacked the knowledge and means to advocate for their voting rights, or did not understand the value of political participation.

For us, persons with intellectual disabilities, exercising the right to vote means that we are citizens, that we belong to our country, and that we can give our opinions on who runs the country and what they should do.

Corinne CLERMONT, Vice President, Nous Aussi (France)

Solution & Methodology

A first phase analysed the situation within EU member states, focusing specifically on the European elections of June 2009. A second phase provided information, good practices, and civic education to politicians, NGOs, and people with disabilities or older persons in order to break down the barriers to their participation in the election processes. Project partners identified three target groups when implementing the two phases: 1) political parties, 2) national electoral bodies organizing the elections, and 3) European Union citizens at risk of encountering problems when attempting to participate in

FACTS & FIGURES

- Three publications have been developed and widely disseminated (in 21 languages) as well as a collection of good practices for accessible elections from 27 European countries (in 3 languages).
- Partners have met with 11 members of Parliament as well as several national-level politicians in France, Scotland, and the Czech Republic. They have also participated in EU-level conferences and cooperated with intergovernmental bodies.

elections. All project deliverables were developed in consultation with the persons at risk, and people with intellectual disabilities from three countries tested all materials to ensure accessibility.

Outlook & Transferability

The ADAP project has been followed-up by both Inclusion Europe (IE) and by project partners. IE has further disseminated ADAP publications on its new “voting-for-all.eu” website, and has included ADAP project outcomes in a manifesto for the 2014 European Parliament elections. French partner and member Nous Aussi has published a poster explaining how to vote, which has been placed in the area of Dunquerque for the 2014 city council and European elections. French members Nous Aussi and Unapei have participated in an official hearing for a report commissioned by the French Prime Minister on how to make elections more accessible, where they further referred to and mentioned the ADAP publications. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems has also requested the collaboration of Inclusion Europe on accessibility of elections and disability issues. The project could easily be copied and reproduced throughout the European Union.



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Persons with disabilities employing their assistants

GERMANY / VBA – INDEPENDENT LIVING E.V.

The association’s work is focused on counselling persons with disabilities in planning and leading an independent life and supporting them in self-employment. It offers a payroll accounting service for employers with disabilities, an internet-based platform for assistance, and a travelling service for wheelchair users.

Problems targeted

Living an independent life is based on, among other things, self-representation towards government and social security authorities as well as service providers and/or providers of health insurance. It includes paying taxes and getting tax benefits, applying for subsidies, gaining employment, etc. People with disabilities are often afraid of managing an independent life because they do not know how to begin and where to get support to manage complex tasks.

“Nothing about us without us”
is the ultimate goal of our work.

Andreas VEGA, Project Coordinator

Solution & Methodology

The VbA’s methodology is based on peer support, whereby councillors who are themselves persons with disabilities accompany and support their peers. The councillors’ skills include psychology, empathy, patience, and expertise in diverse fields of work. In the employer model, all decisions are made by the persons with disabilities. They look by themselves for people who want to assist in their households and they conduct the job interviews. Assistants work under the instructions of the employer. VbA provides the employer with payroll services and/or a job exchange internet platform listing vacant posts.

Outlook & Transferability

Already several independent living centres exist in Germany, which are primarily funded by the government and donations. The counselling is free of charge. The organization is continuing to grow due to the many requests and needs of people with disabilities.



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FACTS & FIGURES

- Approximately 750 consultations have taken place over the last 3 years.
- Over 140 new entries are added to the assistant database each month.
- 65 percent of entries are successful matches between the employer and assistant.



Personal assistance allows people with disabilities to discover new possibilities!

MOBILE, an all-round support program

GERMANY / MOBILE

MOBILE is building a network of support and assistance for persons with disabilities living out of institutions, including their parents, allowing them to lead an independent life.

Problems targeted

For the most part, persons with disabilities still live in institutions, and government support is primarily directed towards these institutions. Independent living in accessible apartments is very rare because few such apartments exist and community services are not widely available.

Equal rights, equal opportunities, equal chances, and equal duties – that’s the heart of independent living.

Dr. Birgit ROTHENBERG, Executive Member
MOBILE Honorary Steering Committee

Solution & Methodology

Originating in the Independent Living movement, MOBILE allows persons with disabilities to analyse their own living situation and conditions, partly using the skills of trained pedagogics. They themselves define their needs for support and develop perspectives on how to live independently in the future. MOBILE informs persons with disabilities about their rights, improves their self-confidence, and assists in the transition process. Depending on the individual needs, pedagogical support, peer counselling, and other low-threshold support is provided.

Outlook & Transferability

The public funding that is available for the employer model of personal assistance (described by MOBILE) is constantly increasing in response to the improved quality of life of persons who use assisted living or other MOBILE services. MOBILE is also offering a training program for organizations interested in implementing this model in their own services.

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FACTS & FIGURES

- MOBILE began to support persons with disabilities in 1983, to provide a service of assisted living in 1992, to support parents with disabilities in 2005, and to provide personal assistance to people with disabilities in 2009.
- Costs for assisted living are in most cases now covered by the Westfalen-Lippe authorities, and according to official figures 1,829 persons are now using this service in this area.
- MOBILE currently supports 195 people, including 13 families with parents who have intellectual disabilities and their 25 children.



A MOBILE team visits another ‘people first’ group in Scotland



MOBILE organizes a demonstration at a railway station under the theme of “Access for all.”

The ‘employer model’ in personal assistance

GERMANY / RHEIN MAIN INKLUSIV

This project offers case management support for persons with disabilities who use personal assistants, and encourages them to organize these assistants themselves – even to being their ‘employer’.

Problems targeted

Many people with disabilities who are dependent on personal support are still living in institutions against their will, or they are dependent on help from their families (parents, partners, etc.), with little control over their own lives.

Solution & Methodology

Counselling and support are offered by a team of experts (psychologists, social education workers, lawyers, business administrator, and entrepreneurs) who have many years of experience dealing with the ‘employer model’. Advice is given in the all relevant areas, including personal budget counselling, cost calculations/monitoring, finding and hiring assistants, organizing work schedules, managing assistants, and mediation in cases of employer/assistant conflict.

Outlook & Transferability

The financial incentive for the government to provide personal assistance using the employer model is that it reduces costs both for persons currently living in as well as out of institutions. The model requires no administration costs or additional investments.

FACTS & FIGURES

- After a certain period of time, the level of experience and self-confidence becomes strong enough for the “new employers” to continue managing their assistants on their own.
- The project oversees more than 200 consultations per year.
- Many new projects are being initiated in 2015, including online course for managing assistants.

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STORY OF STEPHANIE

“Finally, I could leave the house, see my friends, and do household tasks – all with the support of my personal assistants.”

I have cerebral palsy. As a regular school was deemed impossible for me due to my physical disability, I had to spend most of my life in special institutions. After my apprenticeship I went back to my parents’ home, hoping to find a job. Unfortunately, it did not really work out – neither finding a job nor living with my parents.

That’s when I decided to ask my municipality how I could live independently. In my small town there was only a very traditional organization for people with disabilities. They offered me a one-room apartment and a couple of hours of their service for my personal hygiene, but they could not provide me with the kind of assistance that I really needed. After a while I became depressed because I could not leave the house or meet my friends. The local state-appointed social worker sent me to a psychologist because he thought I just couldn’t come to terms with my disability and that I was too demanding.

It was in summer 2013 that I first heard about a new organization, Rhein-Main Inklusiv (RMI), that helped people with disabilities to organize their personal assistance on their own. Corina Zolle from RMI was completely outraged about the situation I was in. We applied for a personal budget so that the money from the municipality would be sent directly to me – as the employer of my personal assistants – rather than to the traditional service provider. By organizing everything on my own and with a little help from RMI, I got many more hours of assistance with the same amount of money than before. Finally, I could leave the house, see my friends, go shopping, and do household tasks – all with the support of my personal assistants. A few weeks later I started going to the local university. Today I am in my third year at the university and I have moved to an apartment in the city where I am studying. Also, with the help of a lawyer I finally succeeded in having assistance around the clock. Now I am already thinking about what might happen to me after finishing my studies and finding a job as a social worker!

Offering individualised support and sharing lessons learned

Supportive Housing: Helping young adults to live independently

IRELAND / NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES

ISRAEL (WESTERN GALILEE) / ISRAEL UNLIMITED

Members of the Next Steps project provide individualized support to people with intellectual disabilities so that they can live a life of their choosing. Notably, the project supports people to move from congregated settings into community-based settings.

Problems targeted
National policy recommends that people with intellectual disabilities are fully included in their communities, and individualised support enables such people to live full lives as equal citizens. However, this requires the provision of a flexible range of support services that are tailored to the needs of the individual, and that are primarily determined by the disabled person him/herself.

I have found the Next Steps meetings excellent for learning and reflection, and I look forward to 2015.

Project participant, November 2014

Solution & Methodology
Next steps aims to identify both supports and barriers to the progress as service providers move to offer more individualised assistance so that the people they support can live a life of their choosing. Through the project the National Federation has developed a community of learning, connecting the member organizations and key stakeholders with each other and enabling cooperation as they develop more innovative community-based support. One of the first actions of the Next Steps project was for the participating organizations to agree on a vision for individualised support, and this vision remains at the centre of the initiatives that the members are continually working towards.


Outlook & Transferability
Each of the participating organizations is working with one or more persons on an individual basis, developing

- FACTS & FIGURES**
- Currently, 23 organizations are participating in the project.
 - 242 individuals with intellectual disabilities have participated to date.
 - The project works across all four health-service regions in the Republic of Ireland

new types of support in line with the agreed vision. Initiatives are monitored regularly, and every two months the participants come together to share the lessons learned with all key stakeholders. The Next Steps Community of Learning is currently reviewing progress to date in order to inform the work plan for 2015 and to continue developing and sharing what is learned. Organizations have shared information through study visits, case study presentations, and two major national conferences. The findings of the project may be relevant for other countries, and the National Federation already collaborates at a European level on shared learning through the European Association for Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (www.EASPD.eu).



Members of the Next Steps project take part in an exercise on inclusive recruitment.

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Problems targeted
Today there are approximately 1 million people of working age (18–65) with disabilities in Israel, many who suffer from more than one disability. Given the lack of government support for independent living,

Israel still has long way to go to allow disabled people to live with dignity, but we are starting with supported housing. We need to work with the families to make them believe in the project.

Shira RUDERMAN, Israel Director, Ruderman Family Foundation


many young adults with disabilities end up in institutions or without adequate services in the community. Those who wish to live independently face many difficulties, such as accessing public buildings, finding suitable accommodations, receiving family support, learning independent living skills, developing a group of friends, and finding appropriate employment.

Solution & Methodology
To ensure a successful transition to independent living, each young adult is assigned a mentor who works with him or her on an individual basis to help define goals and to build a plan for reaching these goals. In addition to personal development, mentors help connect these young adults with existing services in the community. Mentoring also includes helping to find an apartment; to navigate the complex process of receiving all appropriate governmental subsidies,

including those from the Ministry of Housing; reaching out to employment services; opening a bank account; and managing household responsibilities.

Outlook & Transferability
Israel Unlimited, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee's strategic partnership with the Israeli Government and the Ruderman Family Foundation works in partnership with the government, and therefore programs are only piloted with the consent of the government and the agreement that they will be implemented on a national level once deemed successful. Moreover, Israel Unlimited works closely with the Ministry of Welfare to make the program sustainable and to eventually become part of the formal service system in Israel.

- FACTS & FIGURES**
- There are currently three regions that have implemented the program, and to date more than 40 young adults with disabilities have received assistance, support, and guidance and are now living independently within the community.
 - The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) will be quadrupling the scope of Supported Housing, with nine new locations already identified.

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De-institutionalisation and community living since 1980

ITALY / TRIESTE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT & WHOCC

Since 1980 the city of Trieste has closed psychiatric hospitals and set up a network of 24-hour community mental health centres capable of dealing with the most severe conditions and of supporting clients in their daily life, with a view towards recovery and social inclusion.

Problems targeted

Persons with mental health issues used to be held, treated, and categorized as inmates, kept in a locked institution, and excluded from families and community.

As a result of the community mental health centres, deep changes have also occurred in the attitude of communities towards mental health issues.

Roberto MEZZINA, Director, MH Dept / WHOCC of Trieste

Solution & Methodology

As a result of the Italian Mental Health Reform Law (1978), psychiatric total institutions (e.g., asylums, large psychiatric hospitals) were closed and replaced by regional Mental Health Departments over a period of two decades. These offer a wide range of services, such as community mental health centres, small units in general hospitals, day-care centres, and community residential solutions for supported housing. Inpatient beds were closed and patients discharged to their original families, to independent living, or to group-homes. The Trieste Mental Health Department represents the pioneer and most successful example of this reform effort. Beneficiaries can now use services without losing any rights, such as community membership, employment, and the full respect of their human rights.

Outlook & Transferability

The practice was recognised as an experimental pilot area of mental health de-institutionalisation by the World Health Organization in 1974, became a WHO Collaborating Centre in 1987 and is reconfirmed as such until 2018. This means assisting WHO in guiding other countries in de-institutionalisation and development of integrated and comprehensive Community Mental Health services, contributing to WHO work on person centred care and supporting WHO in strengthening Human Resources for Mental Health. Because de-institutionalisation was so successful in Trieste, the community-based approach has been implemented in the whole Friuli Venezia Giulia region and is acting as inspiring model for services, organisations and countries in more than 30 countries - so far particularly in Europe, Asia, South America, Australia and New Zealand.

FACTS & FIGURES

- The Trieste DMH manages 4 community mental health centres, each open 24 hours/ 7 days a week, with 4–8 beds.
- The mental health system includes a rehabilitation and residential support service, with 45 beds in group-homes, as well as a network of 15 social cooperatives, that integrate persons with mental health issues and other disabilities as full members of a social firm.
- Each year 160 clients receive a personal budgeted plan of care.
- About 180 people are in professional training on work grants, 20–25 of whom find employment in the Trieste job market annually.



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A business approach to sustainable community living

JAMAICA / DIGICEL FOUNDATION JAMAICA

Mustard Seed Communities, a project of the Digicel Foundation Jamaica, facilitates the development of minimum assisted-living communities and provides employment for persons with disabilities by offering housing solutions and economic viability via skills training and equipment. The skills training provided in craft and furniture-making increases the employability of people with disabilities, while the provision of fishery, egg, and chicken materials increases the self-reliance of their assisted living facilities via enterprise development.

Problems targeted

An estimated 60 percent of Jamaica's population with disabilities are between 18 and 65 years old, and the majority of these adults are unable to find gainful employment. Furthermore, despite the existence of a national strategy, the transition from institutional care to services that allow persons with disabilities to live within his or her own community and/or family environment is still not a reality in Jamaica.

Our goal is to build an ICT-enabled and sustainable community to support independent living for persons with special needs.

Samantha CHANTRELLE, CEO, Digicel Jamaica

Solution & Methodology

The project focuses on the development of a minimum assisted-living community for adults with mental and physical disabilities, the sustainability of which is achieved through the development of social enterprise initiatives and the construction of a formal skills-training facility. The project is based on two pillars: housing is constructed for those living with special needs; and the self-sufficiency of these individuals is ensured through the provision of the necessary infrastructure, equipment, and training.

Outlook & Transferability

Mustard Seed Communities has thirteen properties catering to vulnerable children and adults, some of which have sufficient land to scale-up the enterprise development via food security initiatives that are currently underway. Through the MSC Business Unit, increased technical assistance will be provided to ensure that a business model is created to further reduce monthly operational expenses by growing the necessary food materials to raise chickens and fish. Linkages are being created between the ICT training facility and other Special Needs Centres of Excellence in Jamaica, the Caribbean, and other territories. The strategy has proven successful and can easily be adapted and used in other educational institutions across the country.



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FACTS & FIGURES

- Mustard Seed Communities (MSC) is an international organization with 12 residential centres throughout Jamaica catering to some 400 abandoned children and adults with disabilities.
- MSC employs nearly 400 local workers, including many with disabilities.
- The Digicel Jamaica Foundation has invested \$247,000 in the program to date.



The production and sale of unique handicrafts by the residents provides income for both the community and the individuals involved.

Returning children to their families and an inclusive environment

MOLDOVA / LUMOS: DE-INSTITUTIONALISATION AND DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Together with the Moldovan Government, Lumos has promoted an integrated policy and program of de-institutionalisation and inclusive education for children with disabilities. This allows them to leave residential care and to return to their families and communities while receiving education in a mainstream school.

Problems targeted

In 2007 approximately half of all children in institutions were those with disabilities living in residential special schools, separated from their families because the only education for such children was provided in segregated schools. When the government initially started a deinstitutionalisation program, it mainly focused on children without disabilities.

Five years in an institution seemed like an eternity. Now I live with my parents and sister, and I want to be here forever!


Dumitrița, 14, child from Moldova read Dumitrița's story on page 15



Author J. K. Rowling, founder and President of Lumos, meets 14-year-old Dumitrița (with glasses), who lived for five years in an institution in Moldova. With Lumos support, Dumitrița was reunited with her family and enrolled in a mainstream school, and is now an active promoter of inclusive education for all children.

Solution & Methodology

Lumos, in cooperation with local authorities, put in place community-based social services making it possible for children with disabilities in institutions to go home to their families or be placed in foster care. Simultaneously, it developed inclusive schools to make it possible for these children to be educated in mainstream schools, alongside their peers. The program also assisted the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education to put in place a law that ensures that government funds that had been going to institutions to support disabled children are transferred with the children to community social services and inclusive schools (for additional support teachers, adaptations to buildings, etc.). To strengthen the capacity of teachers and stakeholders, training and awareness-raising was held for 15,000 professionals. Lumos is also monitoring and evaluating the impact of the transition.

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Outlook & Transferability

The project is completely scalable within Moldova because it has been proven in a number of regions and because the legislation frees up funding from institutions to finance community-based services. The project has demonstrated that it is considerably cheaper per child to support them in a family context and to have them receive an inclusive education in their own community than it is to keep them in an institution. It has also been shown that the increase in developmental and educational outcomes of children living at home with their families is significant.

FACTS & FIGURES

- The number of children in institutions has been reduced from more than 11,500 to less than 4,000 during the period of 2007–2013.
- The number of children with disabilities in inclusive schools reached nearly 4,500 in 2013.

Training to actively engage in civic rights

NEPAL / INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

The project advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities to actively participate in the electoral and political process through training and awareness-raising campaigns. Persons with disabilities are empowered to participate in community groups, such as women's groups, school management committees, youth clubs, cooperatives, etc.

Problems targeted

Persons with disabilities are isolated and excluded from mainstream civic, political, and electoral activities in rural areas of Nepal, where disability is taken as a health issue. Consequently, the political participation of those with disabilities is seldom considered at the decision-making level. In addition, there are still legal restrictions preventing “persons of unsound mind” from voting.

Reaching out to grassroots communities not only provides persons with disabilities with new opportunities but it creates a spirit of engagement and compassion among all involved.


Elizabeth COTE, Country Director, International Foundation for Electoral Systems

Solution & Methodology

In this project the civic, political, and electoral participation of persons with disabilities is not just the responsibility of self-help groups but includes other community groups as well. Working together, persons with disabilities and community groups jointly identify issues, create advocacy plans, and execute them. This has boosted the confidence of persons with disabilities and has encouraged community members to take on disability issues as their own.

Outlook & Transferability

The project can be easily and inexpensively replicated since it is based on advocacy and awareness-raising. If self-help groups lead the advocacy process in collaboration with other community groups, it empowers everyone involved.

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A woman with a physical disability casts her mock ballot in an accessible environment.

FACTS & FIGURES

- 1 national and 6 district-level disabled people's organizations as well as 120 disability-inclusive groups received training, and are now actively promoting civic, political, and electoral rights.
- Approximately 1,200 persons with disabilities are members of ward citizen forums, and thus participate in local decision-making processes.
- More than 1,050 persons with various disabilities are now registered through the regular voter registration process.

Personal assistance is custom-designed

NORWAY / ULOBA

Uloba, Independent Living Norway, is a cross-disability organization that has developed the concept of ‘personal assistance’ based on the Independent Living ideology. Five disabled entrepreneurs founded the organization in 1991 with the goal of achieving equality for disabled people by providing them with personal assistance and the opportunity to live independently and join the work force on an equal basis with others. Uloba is organized as a cooperative society owned by its members – all disabled.

Problems targeted

Disabled people in Norway have been at the mercy of institutions, home care services, and various measures based on the medical model of disability. They have not been considered as a discriminated group with the same right as others to enjoy human rights and participate in society, nor have they viewed themselves in such a perspective. The medical approach to disability is still strong in the health care and assistant service sectors.

Uloba puts the Independent Living ideology’s vision into practice.

Vibeke Marøy MELSTRØM, CEO and co-founder, Uloba

Solution & Methodology

Since Uloba was founded disabled people have come to believe that personal assistance (PA) is the best way to achieve participation in society and full human rights. Under the PA scheme, disabled people learn to supervise their own assistance. They are given responsibility and freedom of choice, and they learn how to use it. Uloba has also developed the “assisted work leader” scheme to give people who cannot lead their assistance without support access to user-controlled personal assistance. This was mainly developed to give children and people with social or intellectual impairment the same access to Independent Living as everybody else who needs assistance.

Outlook & Transferability

The Uloba concept has great transfer value for countries where disabled people are fighting for equality and an independent life. Notably, this form of assistance involves no additional expense, but is simply a



Under the PA scheme, disabled people learn to supervise their own assistance.

matter of shifting funds from institutions and home-care services to personal assistants and to teaching and facilitating people to work. Our system also entails savings in public administration costs relating to counselling, training, and work supervision.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Half of Uloba’s administrative staff consists of disabled people.
- Some 2,900 disabled people in 150 Norwegian municipalities currently make use of personal assistance.
- There are 1,100 members and 5,700 assistants on the Uloba payroll.
- Uloba played a key role in implementing a new law making personal assistance a legal right for individuals who need assistance for more than 25 hours a week and are under the age of 67.

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Inclusion of children and youths with hearing impairments

PAPUA NEW GUINEA / CALLAN SERVICES FOR DISABLED PERSONS

Since 2008, Callan Services for Disabled Persons has provided nationwide educational and vocational training to children and youths with hearing impairments, as well as capacity-building to school teachers on a local level to facilitate the inclusion of these young people in general education institutions.

Problems targeted

Child deafness, often a consequence of malaria or other infection, is widely spread in Papua New Guinea. Approximately 67 percent of all children have ear and hearing problems, and up to 48 percent suffer hearing loss. This ‘hidden disability’ is a leading cause of school drop-out, exclusion, and malnutrition, thus contributing to the cycle of child poverty.

Callan’s support to mainstream education and vocational training leads to greater participation and inclusion of hearing impaired and deaf persons.

Kevin RYAN, Director

Solution & Methodology

Children and youths in all provinces are regularly screened on ear and hearing problems in local institutions. In cases of severe problems, referral to further medical support is facilitated. These children are then prepared for and included in the regular education system through the development of individual education plans. Children and youth with hearing impairments are included in community initiatives and events to give them an opportunity to illustrate their skills and gain acceptance in society.

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FACTS & FIGURES

- Since the beginning of the project Callan Services has reached over 100,000 children and adults.
- The project currently has 20 people directly employed by Callan Services.
- Nationwide, a minimum of 60 additional teachers employed by the Department of Education are directly linked to the project.

Outlook & Transferability

Several manuals have been distributed, and Callan Services is currently working with Light for the World on a lessons learned guide for similar approaches to national hearing health and education projects in other countries.



Screening for hearing impairment is conducted in an elementary school in Ningerum.

Empowerment through peer-to-peer support

RWANDA / NOUSPR

Through the collection of personal stories, the project aims at giving a voice to persons with psychosocial disabilities at the community, national, and international level. Peer-to-peer support, economic empowerment, and advocacy lead to their full participation in political and public life and enable self-determination and independent living.

Problems targeted

Persons with intellectual disabilities face a lack of social support from the state, limited education and employment opportunities, and the absence of sustainable livelihoods. In addition, verbal, physical, and sexual abuse are commonly experienced in institutional settings.

We advocate and provide persons with psychosocial disabilities with a platform for a unified voice to enable them to access all necessary services and opportunities.

Sam BADEGE, World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

Solution & Methodology

Through peer-to-peer support, beneficiaries can better manage and address their individual needs, and families are trained to accommodate persons with disabilities. Income-generating activities increase their standard of living and enable them to contribute financially to their families and communities, which in turn leads to their being recognised as valuable members of society. Such activities also address feelings of low self-esteem and demonstrate to local officials that, given the right support and encouragement, people with disabilities can contribute positively to their community.

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NOUSPR takes delivery of a new sewing machine, which will enable this self-help group to start and run a small-scale tailoring business.

Outlook & Transferability

NOUSPR plans to build the capacity of a national office and at least three district offices such that it will be able to represent the entire country's psychiatric care users and survivors. The movement will be built from the 'bottom up', with NOUSPR working with communities in various districts. Currently, such a national umbrella organization does not exist, but it will be an important step towards networking and further cooperation among stakeholders and disabled people's organizations.

FACTS & FIGURES

- The Rwanda office is composed of 4 paid staff and 2 international volunteers, operating since 2009.
- The program currently has some 1,200 members, 79 per cent of whom are persons who have themselves experienced mental health challenges.
- 14 self-help groups are actively leading an independent life.

Online platform on community-based services

SERBIA / YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES FORUM

Through an online database the project brings together – and shares information among – existing and new community-based service providers for young people with disabilities in three areas: education, employment, and social protection. Networking among individuals and organizations on the local level helps to improve the quality of their services and to better assist the target group.

Problems targeted

Local governments lack the capacity to implement laws and regulations to conform to the new national Law on Social Protection. Also, there is an insufficient number of active service providers, and there is no sustainable mechanism for long-term implementation of community-based services.

Solution & Methodology

A survey and research were undertaken on the current situation in Serbia regarding community-based service providers and policy advancement, with the objective of providing solid evidence on the necessity to enlarge and strengthen these areas. In the second phase, an info portal was developed to provide insight into the development of support services and their territorial representation, and to serve as a guide on available support for current and potential donors as well as for service providers. Finally, five community-based services were newly established to cater to the needs of young people with disabilities and

FACTS & FIGURES

- 59 questionnaires were completed in 4 local governments to collect information on service provider's capacities, accessibility, human resources, type of service provider (civil, public, private), sources of finance, frequency and quality of services, and type and number of beneficiaries.
- According to research results, 21 new and 38 existing service providers were identified. More than 40 service providers entered their profiles on the project's online database.
- The project's web portal is visited by up to 1,000 persons per month.
- To date, 109 final users – young persons with disabilities and their families – have benefited from the service's implementation.

The final users are directly involved in making future plans, which is one of the most important aspects of the program's sustainability.

Sladjana LEVIC, Project Coordinator

their families. In this process, cooperation of service providers and local government was recognized as a key factor for sustainability.

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Outlook & Transferability

The project initiated cooperation among local stakeholders, which will enable continuous ongoing consultation to improve the lives of persons with disabilities at the local level. The programs developed for capacity-building will be implemented in other projects, in other cities and local communities, since the need for such training programs was seen during the project implementation.

The Living Link: Creating Abilities from Disabilities

SOUTH AFRICA / THE LIVING LINK

The Living Link was founded in 2000 and aims to improve the lives of intellectually disabled adults by developing and enhancing their true potential. This development happens through a one-year Adult Integration Programme, which consists of (1) Teaching the essential work readiness and life-skills needed for intellectually disabled adults to become independent and integrated members of society (five months); (2) Providing work training and experience that enables these adults to be employable in the open labour market (five and a half months); and (3) Attending a five-day 'Independent Living tour', during which newly learned skills are applied and assessed.

Problems targeted

Due to the lack of life and work skills, there are negative stereotypes of people living with disabilities, leading to their disempowerment and exclusion from society. As such, the program strives to provide them with independence, work readiness skills, social acceptance and integration, a better quality of life, and employment.

The program strives to provide them with independence, work readiness skills, social acceptance and integration, a better quality of life, and employment.




Every child is gifted, they just unwrap their packages at different times.

Anonymous

Solution & Methodology

The program uses the independent living principles found in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the United States as adapted to the South African context. Further, The Living Link has developed its own methodologies to assist people living with intellectual disabilities to become employed and, if the possibility exists, to live independently. Basic capabilities are developed through work readiness and life-skills training, which then lead to job sampling in order to get experience and participation in the open labour market. With the independent living tour comes a final assessment to understand the individual's growth and capabilities of newfound skills and competencies. This approach is slowly breaking down long-standing stereotypes and barriers that exist for people with intellectual disabilities, and the South African work environment is now slowly embracing the concept of employment of people with disabilities.

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Outlook & Transferability

Currently the organization is based only in the Gauteng province and is the only organization of its kind. The Living Link focuses on adults who have an intellectual disability, and refers candidates to other organizations if they are found to be too low functioning. While there are other organizations that perform similar work, The Living Link is alone in focusing specifically on intellectual disability only. Thus, there is an urgent need to extend the program to other provinces. However, because The Living Link is a non-profit organisation, it is unable to get credit from South African banks, and must therefore explore other sources of financing.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Over 400 students improved their skills since the start of the programme.
- Over 250 intellectually disabled adults have been placed within the South African labour market in the fields of mining, retail, hospitality, garden services, medical, IT, administration, logistics, manufacturing, and many other industries.

An affordable tool to make ballot papers accessible to the blind

SOUTH AFRICA / ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Universal Ballot Template (UBT) is a voting aid made of hard black plastic into which a ballot paper is inserted. The right front of the template has a flap that has cut-out windows numbered in Braille and in large, raised white print. When the ballot paper is inserted into the template, each window aligns to a particular candidate or party, and the voter is free to make his or her secret and independent mark accurately. This can be used by blind and partially-sighted people, low-vision users, people who are dyslexic, the elderly, people with low literacy, and people with motor and nervous conditions that do not allow for a steady hand.

Problems targeted


The aim of the UBT is to assist voters with disabilities to vote independently without the assistance of another person. Every person should have the right to vote secretly, and this is only possible with the use of the UBT.

The UBT is one of the best examples of collaboration and partnering in the pursuit of making voting and elections easy and accessible to all our people, especially the disadvantaged, the sick, and those living with disabilities.

Mosotho MOEPYA, Chief Electoral Officer

Solution & Methodology

The UBT is aligned with the ballot such that each candidate/party's voting block is aligned to a specific hole on the template. In this way the voter can simply look (through counting or reading) for the space of their preferred candidate, thus minimizing the risk of spoiling the ballot paper through human error. Importantly, the UBT also removes the need for assistance by another person, thereby preserving the individual's right to a secret ballot.

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Each party/candidate is aligned to a specific hole on the Template, reducing the risk of error and the need for assistance.

Outlook & Transferability

The concept can be easily copied and used by any and all election management bodies. The most important design consideration is alignment with the ballot design. The rest is a matter of training and familiarization as well as logistic considerations. Costs are relative, and will depend on volume and manufacture. In South Africa the UBT was manufactured at approximately \$1 for the cardboard unit and \$2 for the plastic one.

FACTS & FIGURES

- The UBT has been continuously used in by-elections since June 2011, and since then over 1,288 by-elections have been held almost every month.
- In 2014, UBT was used in national and provincial elections in which more than 18.6 million voters had the option available to them.

Sexual Abuse Victim Empowerment program

SOUTH AFRICA (CAPE TOWN) / CAPE MENTAL HEALTH

Cape Mental Health runs a unique Sexual Abuse Victim Empowerment (SAVE) program that empowers intellectually disabled victims of sexual abuse and provides them with access to justice. The program helps survivors prepare for court proceedings and helps the legal system to understand their special needs. Clinical psychologists administer psychometric tests to determine the complainant's level of intellectual functioning and ability to consent to sexual intercourse. They also assess the competence of the complainant to act as witness and then make recommendations in a court report.

Problems targeted

People with intellectual disabilities are easy prey for sexual predators, and cases of sexual abuse are common.

- Provide training and ongoing technical support to mental health societies, clinical psychologists, and related professionals across South Africa in order to extend the program nationally.

Outlook & Transferability

In 2013–2014, SAVE was able to extend support services to some 100 survivors on an annual budget of SAR694,676 (approximately \$87,000), which testifies to its affordability. In April 2013 the Cabinet of South Africa recommended that the SAVE model be integrated into the public sector gender-based violence intervention system and rolled-out across the country.

The SAVE program attempts to offer people with intellectual disabilities who are victims of sexual abuse the same access to justice as the general population and to ensure conviction of the perpetrators.

Carol BOSCH, Project Manager, Cape Mental Health

Solution & Methodology

- Provide psychological assessments of a victim's level of functioning, competence to act as a witness, and ability to consent to sexual intercourse.
- Provide court preparation, support, counselling, and sex education and sexuality awareness for complainants and their families.
- Provide expert witness by clinical psychologists as required and act as a liaison with all relevant agencies, in particular the South African Police Services and Justice Department.
- Raise awareness among public prosecutors and police when dealing with complainants with intellectual disability by training them in appropriate interviewing skills.

FACTS & FIGURES

- SAVE achieved a 28.1 percent conviction rate, greater than the 25 percent conviction rate indicated by the Law Commission for cases from the general population.
- From just a few cases beginning in 1990, the Department of Justice currently refers more than 100 cases per annum to SAVE for psychometric assessment, court preparation, case planning, and assistance.
- In February 2007, SAVE received a Silver Award from the Impumelelo Innovations Award Trust for its pioneering work, and in 2010 it received an award from the South African Federation for Mental Health for "Innovative Program in the Field of Intellectual Disability."



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Free personal assistance proves cost-effective

SPAIN (MADRID) / ASPAYM

The Oficina de Vida Independiente (OVI Madrid) is a project run by the NGO ASPAYM-Madrid to provide free personal assistance services (PAS) to disabled people within the Madrid region. The project has been funded by the Madrid local government since its founding in July 2006, and since September 2013 it has been co-funded by the European Social Fund. The services provided are designed to be sufficient to fully support all areas of the participants' lives, covering self-care, household care, study, work, mobility, leisure, travel, etc. on a 365-days-a-year basis.

Problems targeted

Currently, personal assistant budgets are just 0.02 percent of total government services and budgets provided by law, and personal assistance is still widely unknown in Spain. The Madrid regional government and ASPAYM-Madrid together launched the OVI Madrid project in order to test how personal assistance works in real life. Initially, it was designed as a pilot project for 35 people, but it soon showed its potential and was increased to 60. The primary objective of the project is to provide sufficient personal assistance services to disabled people within the Madrid region to allow them to live fully productive and participatory lives.

FACTS & FIGURES

- 137,000 hours of PAS were provided and paid for during 2013.
- As a result, 59 people have been living their own lives, wherever they choose, and all of them are working, studying, and/or participating in social activities.
- A social return of investment study conducted by an external consulting firm showed that for every €100 of public funds invested €91.64 is returned to the government via work and taxes.

With enough and self-managed personal assistance, we all can live our lives our own way.

An OVI Madrid participant

Solution & Methodology

Following the Independent Living philosophy, each participant is in charge of his/her PAS. In order to determinate the number of hours of services needed, each participant must complete a document known as the 'PIVI' (the Spanish acronym for Individual Plan for Independent Living). This document gathers all the activities for which personal assistance is needed as well as the amount of time involved. Currently, not all demand can be met, and there is a waiting list of 21 people.

Outlook & Transferability

OVI Madrid is the first project of this kind in Spain and is regularly consulted by other projects that are currently being established in the country. It follows the Independent Living philosophy by allowing people to take control of their own lives by using the 'human tool' called personal assistance. The demand for personal assistance has been an issue all over Spain for a long time. Although the current project is limited to the Madrid region, it can be implemented easily elsewhere. The collaboration between public administration (providing the funds) and an NGO (providing the management of the project) results in a considerable reduction in costs (at OVI Madrid, 98 percent of the investment goes to direct costs).



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Using mainstream lower-cost home automation

UNITED KINGDOM / CONNECT TO CONTROL (SCOPE, BEAUMONT COLLEGE)

The British Telecom (BT) and Scope Beaumont College technology project “Connect to Control/Mind the Gap” centres on the use of Environmental Control Systems (ECS) and how equipment from the mainstream home automation market can be used and made accessible and affordable to students/ service users with disabilities. A key factor that adds value to the BT partnership is that colleagues in services, policy, and fundraising have genuinely collaborated on project outcomes.

Problems targeted

The main barrier is that “normal” equipment from the smart home market is not accessible to people with complex needs due to poor interface design. Therefore, the following criteria have been set:

1. to make a mainstream, off-the-shelf communication and environmental control system accessible to disabled people;
2. to reduce the price of enabling technology;
3. to increase the functionality and range of technologies available to disabled people;
4. to explore why mainstream technology does not meet the needs of disabled people; and
5. to influence the development plans of environmental control suppliers

Solution & Methodology

A working prototype (based on the Vera 2 ‘Z-Wave’ hub) has been demonstrated to a number of age and disability focused ECS companies, which has in some cases influenced their development plans as a result. The prototype’s method of using mainstream

FACTS & FIGURES

- 23 ECS systems have been installed over the life of the project: 19 at Beaumont College and 4 in community living houses.
- A report (“Enabling Technology”) has been published and the whole project has had wide exposure: presented at two conferences, one journal paper, and one public lecture at the Royal Society, London.
- The approaches taken in the prototype system have now been developed into a commercial product called SmartHub, produced by Therapy Box (www.therapy-box.co.uk).

design of products and services for the disabled has been produced, and this has value to the assistive technology and mainstream markets as well as to the technology product and service development communities that build such products. To date, 23 ECS systems have been installed, with 23 students directly using and benefiting from such. Note that students were able to choose the ECS elements that they were most interested in using at the start of the process. This is a person-centred model that focuses on choice, empowerment, and control. For example one student at the college decided to prioritise the control of her music and access to her door, windows, blinds, and lights, so these elements were addressed first.


Outlook & Transferability

The barrier to be overcome is how such ECS systems are specified and installed. To meet this, Scope has developed an internal pilot of a regional assistive technology service which, if successful, Scope will seek to bring to scale.

We have now built a prototype system that is based on mainstream equipment to provide a proof of concept.

Rohan SLAUGHTER, Assistant Principal Scope Beaumont College

equipment and standards has been commercialized in the SmartHub product. A co-designed report that makes a number of recommendations to improve the

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User-led organization teaching and inspiring others

UNITED KINGDOM / SPECTRUM CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)

The SPECTRUM Centre for Independent Living is an established user-led organization (ULO) run by persons with disabilities. It peer-supports the development of new ULOs through the sharing of experiences and information, offering a platform for lessons learned, and providing advice and mentoring.

Problems targeted

UK Government policy requires all local authorities to support and encourage user-led organizations to develop new services through user involvement. Often, local policies are hostile to ULO development; and while local authorities may want to support ULOs, they do not know how to go about doing so. Likewise, new ULOs often do not know where to go for guidance.

We believe that all organizations promoting empowerment and social change should be peer based, and should be fully accountable to and representative of the community they work in.


Ian LOYNES, Chief Executive
SPECTRUM Centre for Independent Living

Solution & Methodology

Sharing experiences and success stories of existing ULOs and providing peer-based mentoring to new ULOs helps them to develop more quickly and to avoid making the same mistakes. SPECTRUM CIL collects existing good practices in ULO development and user involvement and makes these resources available to a wide audience. Lack of such information is often the reason new ULOs fail in their development.

Outlook & Transferability

SPECTRUM CIL has developed a legacy strategy to ensure that the toolkits, resources, support networks,

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Participants gather at the SPECTRUM CIL “Hate Crime” seminar held in October 2014 for ULOs and other organizations that are concerned about hate crimes in the United Kingdom.

and facilities that it has developed will remain available to new ULOs even after the project concludes. All findings and resources are transferable to any developing user-led organization supporting any disadvantaged group (e.g., older people, gays and lesbians, immigration groups, etc.).

FACTS & FIGURES

- Developed 3 new ULOs in Hampshire, 1 in Portsmouth, and 1 in Southampton. Engaged, trained, and supported 95 persons with disabilities to be involved in co-production with local authorities or to develop a new ULO.
- In cooperation with the local authorities of Hampshire, SPECTRUM CIL organized a ‘home care competition’ whereby small ULOs could propose an innovative new way of providing independent living services. As a result, two ULOs received £4,000 each to develop their ideas and to actually provide these services.

A “brokerage” service to provide short breaks

Helpline and platform on personalised care

UNITED KINGDOM (SUFFOLK) / SCOPE AND SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Activities Unlimited (AU) has collaborated with Scope to create this unique service delivering short-break activities for disabled children and young people (DCYP) aged 0 to 25 in Suffolk, UK. Built on the ‘pick and choose’ model of a travel agency, it is aimed at tackling barriers faced by parents/career people who are seeking activities for their disabled children that are safe, fun, and appropriate, while simultaneously giving parents and other caregivers regular breaks from their caring roles.

Problems targeted

Parents of DCYP require regular short breaks to enable them to continue to provide their children with the care they need, but it has proven difficult for families to find and arrange suitable activities for their disabled children during such times. Traditional ‘respite’ models lacked choice: The focus was primarily on caring for the child, and was available only to those with the highest needs. Further, long waiting lists did not always consider the best outcomes of the child.

The team at Activities Unlimited works incredibly hard to support families who have children with additional needs and to ensure that these young people have access to a whole host of fantastic opportunities and activities to enhance their social and life skills.

Cheryl SHARLAND, Head of Inclusive Services, Suffolk County Council

Solution & Methodology

The AU model provides leisure activities for the DCYP and short breaks for their parents/caregivers based on need, taking into account the voice of children, young people, and their families, and using fair, understandable, and transparent eligibility criteria so services are not just restricted to those in crisis situations. Families complete an online self-assessment via the AU website. This identifies the level of offer they receive, which could be an individual budget that can be used to purchase activities, equipment, or 1-to-1 support. Registered families are able to access a


range of suitable activities overseen by the brokerage (Scope), which is responsible for matching the needs and aspirations of disabled young people by developing the market and creating a wide range of short-break leisure and recreation opportunities. Providers of short-break leisure and recreation opportunities wishing to register as AU providers and to promote their services must do so through the brokerage, which has developed a robust quality-control mechanism. The brokerage service gathers feedback from users about the types of activities they would like, and the brokerage proactively approaches specialist and mainstream providers to see how the local market could respond to meet these needs.

Outlook & Transferability

AU offers a model that is responsive to a personalised agenda and is easy both to scale-up and replicate. Grant funding, alongside government support and a set of quality standards, is also available on a time-limited basis for providers who want to develop or improve their offer to disabled children and young people. Scope has adopted the AU model to establish two similar projects in Leeds and Blackpool.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Family outcomes based on user evaluations: “We are able to go out as a family more often” (49%); “Family outings and events are now more enjoyable” (46%); “There are more places/events for the family to go out together” (39%).
- Parent outcomes: “It allows us more quality time with our children” (60%); “We feel better able to cope” (45%); “We have more time to ourselves and for having a social life” (27%).

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UNITED KINGDOM / DISABILITY RIGHTS UK

The project provides advice and information to disabled people on receiving community-care direct payments, creating an individual budget, securing social service funding in relation to care needs, and getting general advice on employing personal assistants. A free download area on the project website (www.disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/helplines/independent-living-advice-line) and a bi-monthly newsletter share personal stories and Q&A sections with a broad audience.

Problems targeted


Financial cuts to local and national services mean there are gaps not only in knowledge of community-care direct payments, personal budgets, etc. but also in where to find information and support on how to apply for such personalised service assistance.

We deliver a knowledge-sharing platform on personalised care to allow disabled people to access the same rights and opportunities as their non-disabled peers.

Michael PAUL, Advice Services Manager, Disability Rights UK

Solution & Methodology

Factsheets are provided free via the website, giving detailed information on community care, possible funding for non-residential accommodation, community-care direct payments, and for complaining about local authority decisions. In addition, personal advice and information is offered by telephone or email, and Q&A examples are shared in bi-monthly newsletters. Approximately 25 percent of recipients are advisers from member organizations, which have a wide reach themselves. Disability Rights UK also writes the Independent Living sections of the Disability Rights Handbook – the ‘benefits bible’ – which sells more than 13,000 copies per annum. In the near future, online forums will be introduced to further enhance communication and information sharing.

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Credit: Disability Rights UK

Outlook & Transferability

Since the service is quite simply set up, it can be easily replicated; and use of online services means information is easily updated and shared. New issues are highlighted through the Q&A sections of the newsletter and website, helping disabled people and their networks to be proactive.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Newsletters have been sent to more than 1,500 recipients, who are encouraged to share them with their own networks.
- Factsheets are downloaded more than 60,000 times per annum, and the number is growing as more factsheets are added.
- More than 800 telephone and email enquiries are received and responded to per annum.

Strengthening electoral systems to be inclusive and accessible

“Infiltration strategy” for women and girls with disabilities

USA (WORLDWIDE) / INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS (IFES)

USA (ACTIVE IN 80 COUNTRIES) / MOBILITY INTERNATIONAL USA (MIUSA)

The Election Access Program of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) promotes opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in the election process by providing specific recommendations to officials regarding election services and the voting environment, such that voter registration becomes more accessible, assistive devices such as tactile ballot guides are created, and transportation to the polls is readily available. Training and advocacy also empowers persons with disabilities to actively participate in the election process.

Problems targeted
Elected officials are unlikely to address the concerns of people with disabilities, such as inclusive education or accessible transportation, if people with disabilities do not have a voice in the political process. Such participation provides the basis for mainstreaming their inclusion in all aspects of society by breaking down social stigmas and increasing the accountability of elected representatives.

Participation in political life provides the opportunity for people with disabilities to demand their rights as equal citizens.

Virginia ATKINSON, IFES

Solution & Methodology
The Election Access Program trains individuals and advocates governments in order to include people with disabilities in the political process. It also lays strong emphasis on women, having developed and distributed voter education materials specifically aimed at women – with and without disabilities – in readily accessible locations, such as marketplaces. It has also conducted leadership training to teach women and other people with disabilities the skills required to participate as leaders in political life. The program has had a strong impact at the national and regional level worldwide, such as successfully advocating for disability inclusion in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration and ensuring that people with intellectual disabilities have political access in Council of Europe member states.

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- FACTS & FIGURES**
- Lead author of the first manual, *Equal Access*, that provides government and civil society with guidance on how to ensure that persons with disabilities have a voice in political life.
 - Developed an election access observation checklist and trained over 700 people in 7 countries to be access observers.
 - Received the 2011 InterAction Disability Inclusion Award.

Outlook & Transferability
IFES's Election Access Working Group shares lessons learned across regional teams and develops reference documents, such as how to interact with employees/partners with auditory disabilities and how to include persons with disabilities in program design. IFES's 2014 manual, *Equal Access*, which details how to include persons with disabilities in elections and political processes, can readily serve as a guideline and starting point for other regions, cities, and countries that seek to make their elections more accessible and to include persons with disabilities in political leadership.



A woman casts her ballot in Aceh, Indonesia.

Problems targeted
Founded in 1981, MIUSA is a disability-led non-profit organization headquartered in Eugene, Oregon, working to advance the rights of people with disabilities globally. By implementing innovative programs, MIUSA is building bridges to create a new era in which people with disabilities will take their rightful place in the world community. Women with disabilities are one of the most marginalized, under-served populations in the world, yet they offer tremendous potential for leadership and the ability to transform communities.

WILD has succeeded in raising strong and dynamic women who are assertive enough to engage their community leaders to promote the issues of women and girls with disabilities in their countries. I am such an example; my level of confidence has tripled since WILD.

Ekaete UMOH, WILD alumna from Nigeria

Solution & Methodology
Creating a unique space for rights-based leadership training specifically for women and girls with disabilities. This is a place to gain confidence and pride, and to build the skills needed to be a force for change. Promoting the strategy of infiltration for both disabled women activists and international development organizations. Disabled women activists must proactively become involved in existing mainstream development programs. International development organizations

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MIUSA is a place to gain confidence and pride, and to build the skills needed to be a force for change.

and women leaders with disabilities must build partnerships to make such inclusion sustainable.

Outlook & Transferability
Utilizing these strategies, disabled women activists and the development community can break the strong links between poverty and disability – championing the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities as beneficiaries and leaders in the many life-enhancing and life-saving development programs that are changing their communities.

- FACTS & FIGURES**
- The 200-plus disabled women activists are followed and measured in terms of their impact and accomplishments.
 - Within 6 months of attending WILD: 72% of WILD alumni received funding or in-kind support from sources they acquired through WILD
 - 92% of international development organization staff report that they had made changes to their organization's policies, programs and practices to be more inclusive as a result of their participation in WILD.

Employment and inclusion of rural girls with hearing impairments

YEMEN / AL SAEEDA ASSOCIATION

Women with hearing disabilities from rural areas receive training and education to ensure their participation in the job market. Informing families and communities about the needs and issues of these women leads to greater understanding and inclusion, which in turn helps to empower them economically and socially.

Problems targeted


Girls with hearing impairments do not have access to an education that would ensure them a dignified life, and often they do not have the right to learn unified Yemeni sign language. Thus, they cannot communicate with others or express their needs and opinions.

The peer-to-peer approach of our organization empowers women with hearing impairments to actively participate in society and encourages them through outstanding role models.

Manal AL ASHWAL, President, Al Saeeda Association

Solution & Methodology

Women are trained and educated to generate a steady income in such careers as hairdressing, engraving, handicrafts, knitting, and sewing. In addition to capacity-building, Al Saeeda Association advocates with local decision-makers to highlight the issues of persons with hearing impairments and to actively promote schools that integrate them. The project is executed by women who themselves have a hearing impairment, and this peer-to-peer support offers positive role models for young girls. Even the sign language classes are taught by the hearing impaired.

 **Ms. Manal AL ASHWAL**
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In Haifan, Taiz, a deaf trainer teaches some 30 women with hearing impairments how to sign.

Outlook & Transferability

There is a great demand and need for sign language training and the teaching of professional careers. Currently, the project faces several obstacles to its growth, including a lack of sewing machines, insufficient transportation for trainees, a poor supply of electricity, and too little space, among others.

FACTS & FIGURES

- To date, 30 girls aged 15–34 have participated in the programme.
- 5 teachers and women trainers are learning sign language to become trainers of the deaf.
- Currently, 9 girls with hearing impairments and 4 interpreters from Al Saeeda Association work on this project.

Enfranchising people with disabilities in Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE / JAIROS JIRI ASSOCIATION

The five-year program has sought to secure the inclusion of people with disabilities in Zimbabwe's governance systems by advocating for their accessibility to polling stations and thus enhancing their ability to vote secretly and independently. The program also aimed at ensuring proportional representation of people with disabilities in Parliament and other decision-making bodies, a quota system in employment, lobbying for the creation of a disability ministry, and the enactment and implementation of disability legislation.

Problems targeted

The rights of people with disabilities were not explicitly defined in the constitution of Zimbabwe and most sectors of society had no policies that were inclusive of disability. This is because disability, in most sectors of the society, is regarded as a charity issue rather than a development or human rights issue. The Disability Act of 1992, reviewed in 1996, falls short in terms of adequately addressing these rights. The participation of people with disabilities in decision-making processes has been hindered by some restrictions imposed by both physical and attitudinal barriers, including inaccessible buildings and the lack of access to useful information.

Overall, the use of the multi-stakeholder innovation with a focus on the rights of people with disabilities contributed greatly to their increased participation in governance systems and other development activities, as well as increased recognition and acceptance of people with disabilities in their communities.

W. N. RUVERE, National Executive Director, JJA

Solution & Methodology

The project aimed at increasing the number of people with disabilities who (1) participate as election observ-

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Fr. Dagmar LASSMANN, Diakonie Österreich
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FACTS & FIGURES

- Several voter education exercises covered all 29 wards in Mutoko district and the 18 wards in Mudzi district, reaching 2,817 people with disabilities, 750 caregivers, and 200 community leaders in Mutoko, and similar numbers in Mudzi.
- A 2009 baseline survey revealed that only 0.01 percent of voters in the 2008 elections were people with disabilities, whereas the number climbed to 3.6 percent in the 31 July 2013 harmonised elections – a significant improvement resulting from this governance program.

ers in the country's local and national elections; (2) cast their votes in local and national elections; and (3) stand as candidates in local and national elections. Community involvement was key to the success of the program and led to the establishment of local disability committees. These committees, which were trained by Jairos Jiri Association, have a crucial role to play, as they are part of the organization's phase-out and sustainability strategies.

Outlook & Transferability

The governance program was carried out with the maximum involvement of the beneficiaries and concentrated on empowering communities. The program gives room to communities to apply strategies that work in their own situations, and thus is sufficiently flexible to be transferred to other countries. It is also possible to scale-up the program within Zimbabwe, as it would have an even greater impact if the whole country were covered. Costs can be shared among communities to cover workshops, meetings, and voter education campaigns as well as information, education, and communication materials.

Success stories of Innovative Practices 2014

The Zero Project awards Innovative Practices since 2013, using its current research and selection procedure and with a thematic focus. In this section of the Zero Project Report, Innovative Practices of the year 2014 were “re-visited”. Find selected news stories here.

COLORADD, PORTUGAL

End of 2014 the Vodafone Foundation announced the four winners of the 2013 Mobile for Good Europe Awards. In the accessibility category, the price went to ColorADD, an application that enables colour-blind users to understand colours through a simple coding system. The award is organised every year by the Vodafone Foundation in collaboration with the European Disability Forum and AGE Platform Europe.



ACCESSIBLE MUSEUMS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Training museum professionals in the Western Balkans to improve access to their buildings, collections and activities for persons with disabilities and enabling positive participation while challenging negative stereotypes. In October 2014 the first ever Balkan Museums without Barriers conference took place, organized by the Balkan Museum Network and funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. Over 50 participants from across the western Balkans gathered in Sarajevo to share their experiences, challenges, knowledge and commitment to making museums and heritage more accessible to disabled people. Many NGOs also attended. Delegates voted the ‘Museum in a Suitcase’ from the National Museum of Bosnia Herzegovina as the best project for access and innovation.

ACCEO, FRANCE



Acceo offers telephone services to enable conversations between persons with hearing impairments and hearing persons. Registered companies, organisations and public institutions can provide a new dimension in customer service by enabling communication with the hearing impaired. Since September 2014, the town of Metz has made its single telephone number “Hello Mayor” accessible for persons with hearing impairments. Metz is the first city of over 100,000 inhabitants which is made accessible thanks to the services of ACCEO.



CETRAM, CHILE

CETRAM is a community-based organisation which helps to find personalised solutions for individual needs in regard to wellness and health. It offers technical aids and assistive technology at low cost at home. In 2015 CETRAM is taking its activities one step further - in cooperation with the Ministerio De Desarrollo Social (Ministry for Social Development) and the Servicio Nacional de la Discapacidad (SENADIS) CETRAM offers training courses in 2015 to further enhance independent living and empower persons with disabilities in leading the life they wish to.



CHANGING PLACES, UNITED KINGDOM

A Changing Places toilet provides equipment, space and facilities (including hoist and adult-sized changing bench) for persons with disabilities who need assistance and cannot use standard accessible toilets. Changing Places toilets should be provided in addition to standard accessible toilets. After working to support the development of the Changing Places campaign in Australia over the past three years, the Victoria Coalition Government decided in 2014 to invest \$750,000 to build six Changing Places in popular public spaces and to provide a mobile facility to give people with a disability greater independence and to better support their families and carers.

VERBAVOICE, GERMANY

VerbaVoice offers an innovative online interpreting technology as well as full services for deaf and hard of hearing people: enabling students to equally participate in class; accessible events with captions, interpreting and live-stream. In October 2014 VerbaVoice was recognized as the regional winner of Bavaria within the competition ‘Start-up Champion 2014’ of KfW Group (German government-owned development bank). The prize was awarded during the German start-up and entrepreneurs days (deGUT). The award ceremony was held at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy in Berlin.



OPEN THE WINDOWS, MACEDONIA

In June 2014 Open the Windows delivered trainings on assistive technology use in two mainstream secondary schools: Orde Copela in Prilep and Brakja Miladinovci in Skopje. This was undertaken as part of the USAID Project for e-Accessible Education. The trainings were largely interactive: practical exercises and simulations enabled participants to experience the potential benefit that assistive technology brings for students with disabilities. Over 40 teachers and school staff attended, who will be able to use new teaching and working methods in their work with students.

Innovative Policies 2015 – Selection and Key Findings

Key findings

How Innovative Policies were researched and selected;
summaries and analysis

Fact Sheets

Factsheets from all Innovative Policies 2015, ranked by
country of origin

Policies of 2014

News and development from Innovative Policies of
former research periods

Life Stories

Persons with disabilities explain how selected Innovative
Practices have changed their life for the better

Key Findings of Innovative Policies

ZERO PROJECT 2015

This year the Zero Project received 27 Innovative Policy nominations from around the world. Of these, the Zero Project expert network selected 11 policies that measurably advance the right of persons with disabilities to live independently and/or to exercise their political rights.

Definition

Innovative Policies have achieved identifiable improvements on the ground, and have demonstrated a positive dynamic of change that can be easily replicated in many countries to advance the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CPRD). Like all innovation, some policies may be incomplete or dependent on other developments to maximize their impact. Some policies, no matter how positive, may also contain elements of old thinking. Since the implementation of the UN CRPD is a work in progress for all countries, these elements are taken into account in the overall assessment of innovation.

Methodology

The nomination, research, and selection process for Innovative Policies is a multi-step approach, involving a network of experts along the way.

Nomination

Each year the nomination process begins by contacting the full Zero Project network, asking nearly 2,000 experts worldwide to nominate Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies (see previous chapter on Innovative Practices for details). The Essl Foundation then researches all practice nominations, while all policy nominations are researched by the World Future Council. By July 2014, 27 policies from 20 countries had been received.

Screening and shortlisting

A first screening of the nominated policies was undertaken, filtering out those that did not fit the established criteria. For the remaining nominations, 43 experts on disability, independent living, and political participation selected from the Zero Project's

network were asked to shortlist those policies that they considered most innovative; that promised the greatest outcome, impact, and effectiveness; and that were transferable, scalable, and cost-efficient. Of the 27 original proposals, 19 policies were shortlisted in that process.

Research

All 19 shortlisted policies were researched by the World Future Council, which applied its Future Just Law-making Methodology (based on the International Law Association's 2002 New Delhi Declaration – Principles of International Law). The research team conducted written interviews with representatives from governments, academia, and disabled peoples organizations about each of the policies, and verified the information provided in the nomination. In total, 66 experts were involved in this process, answering generic questions and/or clarifying specific aspects of the policy's development, implementation, and monitoring.

Selection

In September 2014 more than 100 experts of the Zero Project network – including at least two from each country where the shortlisted policies were implemented – were invited to participate in the final round to choose the Innovative Policies of the Zero Project 2015. The 11 Innovative Policies that were finally selected come from four continents and cover a broad variety of approaches and backgrounds.

Policies: Tools for social change

Policies can be excellent tools for promoting social change. The diversity of the 27 nominated legal instruments embraced, for example:

- Performance standards for polling station staff
- Action plans promoting electoral accessibility

- Programmes assisting persons with disabilities with the purchase and fitting of aids and appliances
- Laws establishing peer counseling as a social profession or representative bodies in municipalities for people with disabilities

While employing a broad range of mechanisms, the 11 Innovative Policies can be categorized as follows:

- Laws (4): Japan, Sweden, Uganda and Upper Austria
- Decrees (2): Flanders and Spain
- Policy (2): South Africa and Sweden
- Strategy (1): New Zealand
- Funding agreement (2): Luxembourg and United Kingdom

For different government levels and bodies

Innovative Policies 2015 are established at all levels of government, from the local/municipal level (Sweden's Personal Ombudsmen) to the regional level (Upper Austria and Flanders) up to the national level (Sweden, United Kingdom, etc.). Some policies concern exclusively the most important legislative body at the national level: the Parliament (South Africa, Japan, etc.). Others concern the mandate and operation of an independent agency organizing and overseeing elections: the Electoral Commission (New Zealand, etc.). In order to ensure the full implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities, it is crucial to mainstream these rights at all levels of policy-making.

For persons with all types of disabilities

Many existing policies include their own, restrictive definition of disability or refer to a definition found in another law, often the country's antidiscrimination law. However, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities does not include a definition of disability, and states explicitly in its Article 1 that persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments. The overall goal should be to avoid spelling out an unavoidably restrictive definition of disability and to implement steps relevant for "all, regardless of disability", as stated for example by New Zealand's strategy for electoral access.

Including the most excluded groups

There are persons with certain types of disabilities that are more severely affected than others. These include persons with extensive disabilities who need daily assistance in order to be able to live independently in their family's or their own home. Sweden is one of the few countries that have established a right to a personal assistance budget. Among the most neglected groups are also persons with severe mental and psychosocial problems. In

Innovative Policies have achieved identifiable improvements on the ground, and have demonstrated a positive dynamic of change that can be easily replicated in many countries to advance the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CPRD).

Part of Zero Project's definition of Innovative Policies

such cases, the Personal Ombudsmen in Sweden have proven to be true "change makers" in the lives of many disabled persons. Similarly, in Upper Austria persons with disabilities who have psychiatric experience can become qualified peer counsellors who can then help other disabled persons currently in psychiatric care.

Persons who are placed under guardianship often lose their legal rights, including their right to vote. A spectacular 2013 court ruling in Japan established that provisions that deprive persons under guardianship of their voting rights are unconstitutional, and the repeal of such provisions led to the enfranchisement of more than 136,000 people.

Also, plain language users that is, people with limited language skills are another group that is often neglected by policy-makers. An exception is this year's Innovative Policy that comes from New Zealand. Its strategy aims for electoral accessibility for all, including measures targeted at persons with intellectual disabilities.

Peer counselling as an approved profession

AUSTRIA / UPPER AUSTRIA, DIRECTORATE HEALTH AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Acknowledging that peer counselling is crucial to empower persons with disabilities, Upper Austria established – for the first time worldwide – peer counselling as an official social profession, approving people with physical, psychosocial, and intellectual disabilities as skilled professionals in their field.

In brief

A peer counsellor has intimate knowledge of disabilities, is emphatic towards similarly affected people, and is uniquely able to provide guidance and assistance to help others take greater control of their lives – in their homes, their communities, and their work place. With the help of the regional Independent Living Centre, Upper Austria introduced peer counselling as a social profession in 2008, and it remains the only region to do so worldwide. In addition, nowhere else is peer counselling based on such comprehensive qualifications, or places such value on the experience of disabilities.

As a peer counsellor with psychiatric experience, I would like to encourage people with psychiatric problems to engage openly with their problems and to accompany them with compassion.

Gerda Stöllnberger,
certified peer counsellor with psychiatric experience

Innovative aspects

Disability as an asset: As a role model, a peer counsellor's experiences, knowledge, and coping skills uniquely equip him/her to provide guidance and advice to other persons with disabilities.

Professionalism: Establishment of peer counselling as a social profession provides for a high standard of

FACTS & FIGURES

- Since 2009 disability-specific qualification courses (psychosocial, physical, intellectual, etc.) have certified more than 70 professionals.
- In 2014, 76 peer counsellors offered up to 1,320 hours of service per week, tailored to various types of disability.
- Counsellors are active in a variety of organizations.

qualification, the formalization of rights under collective agreements, and professionalization.

Empowerment: A peer counsellor does not solve problems for others, but rather provides the necessary support to help a person with disability to find the right solutions on her or his own.

Context

When persons with disabilities first began to attend the University of California at Berkeley, they made use of peer counselling. This proved crucial for the development of the Independent Living Movement, which demanded equal opportunities. In the 1980s the concept of peer counselling was further developed, with courses generally offered by centres for independent living; and since the 1990s most health institutions have increasingly requested such a qualification. This was the case in Upper Austria, where

peer counselling was formalized under the state's Social Professions Act to complement and augment the other services offered under the state's Equal Opportunities Act.

Key features

A peer counsellor is one who has personal disability-related experiences, who is a good listener, and who has been trained in a variety of problem-solving techniques in order to provide support and guidance to similarly affected people. They can serve as a critical link between the person with disabilities seeking help and the service providers and/or the family. Since 2009 four qualification courses designed for various disability experiences, such as physical, intellectual, and psychosocial, have been offered by FAB Organos – the responsible training organization – at the regional Empowerment-Centre of the Upper Austrian Independent Living Initiative. The qualification process, which is financed by the region, is comprised of 240 teaching units and 80 hours of internship. Accommodations are provided. The curriculum addresses knowledge for communication, counselling on independent living, and disability-related laws and services in Upper Austria.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- Upper Austria facilitated job opportunities, and now service providers employ 72 peer counsellors.
- Peer counsellors have achieved a better salary grade.
- A professional association of peer counsellors has been established.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

To date, no other region or country has developed, implemented, and/or recognized disability-specific peer counselling. However, other Austrian regions (e.g., Styria and Salzburg) as well as European countries (e.g., Sweden and Bosnia) are planning to introduce a similar policy.

i Amendment of the Social Professions Act
Upper Austria, Directorate Health and Social Affairs, Austria

Nominated by Ms. Ingrid HEINDORF,
World Future Council, Switzerland

Sources: Upper Austria's Social Professions Act, 2008 (in German): <http://bit.ly/1v43MKI>
Gisela Hermes, Förderung der Selbstbestimmung durch Empowerment, 2010 (in German): <http://bit.ly/1oLLpaX>

THE STORY OF GERDA STÖLLNBERGER

“I would like to encourage people with psychiatric problems to engage openly.”

Recently, Gerda Stöllnberger concluded Upper Austria's peer counsellor qualification course, becoming a professional peer counsellor with psychiatric experience. “With the peer counselling qualification, I have become more confident and I have learned to better delimit myself,” says Ms. Stöllnberger. “During the qualification course I got to know many interesting people. As a peer counsellor with psychiatric experience, I would like to encourage people with psychiatric problems to engage openly with their problems, and I want to accompany them with compassion. Ideally, I hope to exercise my skills as a peer counsellor on a full-time basis.”



Empowerment Center: Peter, Margit, and Christian

Flanders' Personal Assistance Budget

BELGIUM / FLANDERS, MINISTRY FOR WELFARE & AGENCY FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

The support that persons with disabilities receive is often based on the charity model and not on human rights. In Flanders persons with disabilities can chose to receive a Personal Assistance Budget, which allows them to fully control the support they receive.

In brief

In 2000, the Belgian Flemish Region approved Personal Assistance Budgets (PAB). Similar to Swedish law, the most important feature of a PAB is that the person with disabilities (or their representatives) controls both the assistance and the assistance budget, not the assistance provider. The budget holder decides who works as an assistant, for which assignments, at what time, and where and how the assistance will take place.

Innovative aspects

An alternative to institutionalization: Personal Assistance Budgets provide an alternative to the institutionalization of children and adults with disabilities and enable these individuals and their families to live and participate in the community, as set out in article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Self-determination: Since PAB users are free to determine and organize their own assistance and care corresponding to their needs and preferences, the budget enables them to make their own life choices and to develop their personal talents.

Context

In general, the Flemish Government funds licensed service providers for the number of persons with disabilities they assist, treat, and care for. Service users have no influence or control over the support and its organization. If the service user wants to leave the service, he or she loses funding and support, and is put on a waiting list. In 1987 some Flemish pioneers with disabilities founded Independent Living Flanders, which raised awareness about the abilities of individuals with disabilities and their need for personal

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Year: 2000
- In July 2014 there were 2,481 PAB users in Flanders.
- Due to a limited macro-budget, about 6,000 people are waiting for a PAB.
- Each PAB is based on support needs, and is between €9,643 and €45,000 for a total of approximately €90 million.

assistance. In 1997 the first pilot Personal Assistance Budget project was started in Flanders with 15 persons with disabilities. As a result, in 2000 the Flemish Parliament approved the PAB decree.

Key Features

The Flemish Agency for People with a Disability (VAPH) administers the Personal Assistance Budget, which is financed by the Flemish Ministry for Welfare. Unlike Sweden, the application for a PAB is open to all persons with disabilities below the age of 65 who are on file at the VAPH. However, the yearly budget allocated by the Ministry limits the total number of PAB users. A multi-disciplinary team assesses and decides the yearly budget each user receives, depending on his or her support needs. Reassessments are possible once a year. The person concerned has freedom of choice in whom and how to employ assistants, in respect to relevant laws and regulations. The VAPH monitors correct spending of the PAB and has the power to inspect the use of the budget.



A young man works on a computer with the help of his personal assistant

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- The PAB has greater cost-effectiveness and a better impact on quality of life compared with care-in-kind, according to existing research.
- 6,000 people are currently on the PAB waiting list.
- Parliament recently approved a decree whereby financing follows the service user, which expands the self-determination of the PAB to all people with disabilities, including those receiving care-in-kind.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

The PAB is transferable to all countries. It has been successfully used by persons with a variety of disabilities, with support from disability organizations. Similarly to Sweden, existing research indicates that the PAB has a greater cost-efficiency than supply-driven support.

Only thanks to my personal assistance budget am I able to keep on doing what I do now: going to work and being a father and a husband.

Peter, a PAB user

Flemish Government Decree on the Procedures for Grants (Personal Assistance Budget) to Persons with Disabilities
Flanders, Ministry for Welfare & Agency for People with a Disability, Belgium

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Nominated by Mr. Peter LAMBREGHTS, Onafhankelijk Leven vzw, Belgium

Sources: ENIL, Personal Assistance Tables on Belgium, 2013: <http://bit.ly/1xAPLmP>
VAPH, on the PAB: <http://bit.ly/1ufBbjO>; Full text of the Flemish Government Decree, 15.12.2000: <http://bit.ly/1m3LeGY>

Enfranchising people under guardianship

JAPAN / PARLIAMENT, TOKYO DISTRICT COURT

Around the world, restrictions of voting rights based on intellectual disabilities and the lack of legal capacity deprive people of their political rights. Court cases are key to repealing such discriminatory provisions. In 2013 a prominent court case in Japan led to the enfranchisement of more than 136,000 persons.

In brief

Until recently, Japan's Election Law deprived people under adult guardianship of their right to vote and to stand for elections. In a spectacular court case in 2013, the Tokyo District Court judged this relevant article unconstitutional. As a result, the Parliament swiftly – in only 74 days after the ruling – repealed the discriminatory article, which led to the enfranchisement of more than 136,000 persons under guardianship.

Innovative aspects

Successful court case: This is the first time that a court in Japan has ruled that it is unconstitutional for the Election Law to deprive persons under guardianship of their right to vote.

Voting regardless guardianship: The ruling promotes the right to vote regardless of guardianship – a milestone in recognizing the legal capacity and political rights of persons with disabilities, as required by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 5 (non-discrimination), Article 12 (equal recognition before the law), and Article 29 (right to participation in political and public life).

Speedy revision by Parliament: Wide public support in favour of this ruling pressured members of Parliament, both ruling and opposition, to revise the Election Law in only 74 days after the ruling.

Context

Each year in Japan about 24,000 people are placed under “Koken” – the most restrictive category of adult guardianship – which deprives persons with disabilities, among others, of their right to vote. One such

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Year: 2013
- The non-governmental organization Inclusion Japan collected 410,000 signatures in support of the court case.
- The court found the provisions depriving persons under guardianship of their voting rights unconstitutional.
- Parliament promptly revised the Election Law accordingly.

person was Ms. Takumi Nagoya, a 52-year-old woman with Down syndrome, who voted in every election since she turned 20 until her father was appointed as her legal guardian. Encouraged and represented by her father, Mr. Seikichi Nagoya, she sued the Japanese Government in February 2011, asking the court to restore her voting right for the coming elections. The public widely supported her case, and on 14 March 2013 the Tokyo District Court ruled that it was unconstitutional for the Election Law to deprive persons under Koken guardianship of their right to vote. On 27 May 2013 the Parliament unanimously revised the Law by deleting the relevant article.

Key Features

The presiding judge, the Hon. Jozuka Makoto, ruled that the right to vote and to run for elections is a fundamental right and is guaranteed in different articles of the Constitution. The restriction of this right can be

admitted only in exceptional cases when unavoidable circumstances require it. Otherwise, the restriction is unconstitutional. On 27 May 2013 the Japanese Parliament unanimously revised the Election Law, deleting Article 11.1.1, which deprived people under adult guardianship of their right to vote and right to stand for elections.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- More than 136,000 people under Koken guardianship gained voting rights.
- The results of a data collection on how to make the rights of those with restored voting rights become reality were shared with the media and government.
- Local governments organized political debates, offered mock voting, or provided more personal assistants for persons with disabilities at the polling stations.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

Inclusion International and International Disability Alliance are promoting the case to the governments of other nations. To date, Austria, Canada, France, Sweden, and the United Kingdom have reduced or eliminated the restriction of voting rights based on intellectual disabilities and the lack of capacity.

I cannot die while my daughter's voting rights are being denied.

Mr. Seikichi Nagoya

i **Revision of Election Law**
Parliament, Tokyo District Court, Japan

Nominated by: Mr. Nagase OSAMU,
Ritsumeikan University, Japan

Sources: Nagase Osamu, Deprivation of voting rights ruled unconstitutional, 2013: <http://bit.ly/1qzCKIA>
Inclusion International, Voting Rights Restored by the Revision of Election Law, 2013: <http://bit.ly/1GRMJpJ>

THE STORY OF TAKUMI NAGOYA

“Please use your political rights and take part in society.”

Ms. Takumi Nagoya is a 52-year-old woman with Down syndrome. She consistently voted into her early twenties, until she was deprived of her right to vote because of the appointment of her father as her legal guardian. She went to court in order to regain her right to vote, with the strong support of her father who dramatically declared that he could not die while his daughter was deprived of her voting rights. In 2013, when delivering the ruling that re-established Ms. Nagoya's basic right to vote, Judge Makoto Jozuka concluded his decision with the encouraging words: “Please use your political rights and take part in society. Be proud and lead a good life.”



Ms. Takumi Nagoya with her parents at Tokyo District Ruling on 14 March 2013

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Funding a national disability information centre

LUXEMBOURG / MINISTRY OF FAMILY AFFAIRS, INTEGRATION, & FOR THE GREATER REGION

Because policies targeting people with disabilities are often not coordinated, people have difficulty finding their way through the bureaucracy. A national disability information centre is a classic win-win solution: It assists people with their administrative procedures and helps policy makers to shape inclusive policies.

In brief

Info-Handicap is a national disability information and meeting centre, founded in 1993 by 16 disability organizations. While the idea for such a centre came from the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration, and for the Greater Region, which also financially supports it, Info-Handicap is under the full control of its disability member organizations. The centre assists people with disabilities to find their way through complex administrative procedures and competences. Additionally, Info-Handicap has become a driver of inclusive policies as well as the main contact on any disability-related questions.

Innovative aspects

A driver for inclusive policies: One of the major challenges in the implementation of inclusive policies is to organize the dialogue between decision makers and civil society. Info-Handicap's unique position allows it to receive and dispatch input from and to all levels, and thereby to function as a hub that facilitates such a dialogue smoothly and on a permanent basis.

Identification of challenges and solutions: This leads firstly to improved identification and understanding of the existing challenges and, secondly, to increased opportunities for developing adequate solutions.

Concrete help: Info-Handicap offers information and guidance for persons with disabilities, for members of their family and social circle, as well as for others who are interested. This includes a legal information service and, in cases of discrimination, a meeting with a lawyer.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Year 1993
- Info-Handicap now has 55 member organizations in Luxembourg.
- In 2013, 2,271 persons asked for advice and 597 used the centre's legal information service.
- Info-Handicap has developed guidance books and has influenced laws and practices in Luxembourg and beyond.
- Since 2005 the centre has held the accessibility competition "A municipality for everybody."

Context

In 1989 the Government of Luxembourg decided that policies targeting people with disabilities should be coordinated. The Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration, and for the Greater Region was entrusted with the implementation of this idea, and it developed the project of a national disability information centre financially supported by the government, but managed under the control of national disability organizations. In April 1993, 16 disability organizations, which together formed the National Disability Council, founded Info-Handicap and signed a funding agreement with the government. Since then, Info-Handicap has constantly sought to carry out its mandate, including initiatives that have an impact beyond Luxembourg's

borders. Recently, Info-Handicap assisted in elaborating a strategy for setting up a national disability action plan, and functions as a resource centre in this area.

Key Features

Info-Handicap offers information and guidance for persons with disabilities, for members of their family and social environment, as well as for others who are interested in the field of disability. Staff assists persons with disabilities to fill in forms or write letters, and to address the correct contact points in the most direct way. In addition, they organize legal assistance and, in cases of discrimination, there is the possibility to meet with a lawyer free of charge. They undertake activities for supporting independent living, offer training, organize awareness-raising events, and promote accessibility. Importantly, they encourage their members to insist on the right to inclusion and not to accept exclusive mechanisms. The work of Info-Handicap is continually monitored by the Ministry and member organizations.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- Info-Handicap's experience has led to its reputation reaching all of Europe.
- Info-Handicap regularly represents the European Disability Forum at official events and has been the partner or coordinator of projects funded by the European Commission.
- Since 1999, Info-Handicap has also coordinated the European Concept for Accessibility Network.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

The idea of a national disability information centre is perfectly transferable to other countries, regions, or even to local levels. Info-Handicap's yearly costs are around €600,000, including the salaries of 6.7 staff members – three with disabilities.



Conference on legal capacity of persons with disabilities

Info-Handicap plays an important role in empowering persons with disabilities as well as in involving civil society in decision-making. I highly recommend other countries to follow a similar path.

Mrs. Corinne Cahen,
Minister of Family Affairs, Integration, and for the Greater Region

i Funding Agreement for a National Disability Information and Meeting Centre between Info-Handicap and the Government
Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration, and for the Greater Region, Luxembourg

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Nominated by Mr. Silvio SAGRAMOLA, Info-Handicap – National Disability Information and Meeting Centre, Luxembourg

Sources: Info-Handicap, Statute: <http://bit.ly/1m5MCIG>; Info-Handicap, List of Members: <http://bit.ly/1q3tbLT>; Info-Handicap, Guide du Handicap: <http://bit.ly/1oUFS1N>; Info-Handicap, Activity Report: <http://bit.ly/1s45Efs>

Improving access to electoral events

NEW ZEALAND / ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Persons with disabilities may encounter a number of barriers when enrolling and voting at elections. To ensure that all aspects of the electoral process are accessible to these persons, New Zealand’s Electoral Commission has implemented a comprehensive strategy, in close cooperation with civil society.

In brief

In 2014, New Zealand’s Electoral Commission finalized its Access 2020 Disability Strategy. This strategy takes the improvements made over the past three electoral cycles and embeds them into a longer-term framework, through which the Commission aims to reduce barriers that persons with disabilities may encounter when enrolling and voting at elections. In addition, it provides information in accessible formats and maintains strong relationships with the disability sector.

Innovative aspects

Telephone dictation voting: In 2012 electoral regulations for the first time enabled anyone who is blind, partially blind, or has another physical disability that prevents them from marking their paper ballot without assistance to cast a secret ballot from home via telephone dictation.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Year 2014
- The Commission offers a wide range of information and resources in accessible formats.
- Some 1,500 videos, 8,000 large brochures, 15,000 Plain English Guides, and 11,000 posters have been produced.
- Web content also appears in New Zealand sign language.
- 11,500 videos explaining telephone dictation voting have been distributed.

Accessibility: Access 2020 recognizes the need to ensure that materials about enrolling and voting are appropriate, accessible, and easy to understand.

Strong relationship with disability sector: Public consultations on the draft strategy brought together representatives from a range of disabled peoples organizations (DPO), including people with physical, hearing, vision, learning, and intellectual impairments. The Commission has worked with a number of DPOs and service providers to deliver on its goals, and continued all existing accessibility initiatives for the 2014 general election.

Having a say on Election Day is the right of all New Zealanders. In close cooperation with the disability sector, Access 2020 shows how this can become a reality.

Robert Peden, Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Commission

Context

Since 2005 the Electoral Commission has been working to improve access to electoral events for New Zealanders with disabilities. In consultation with the disability sector, action plans were developed and implemented for the 2005, 2008, and 2011 elections that detailed initiatives to improve accessibility of venues and information. Access 2020 takes the improvements made over the past three electoral cycles and embeds them into a longer-term framework. When preparing Access 2020, the Electoral Commission first published a consultation document in a range of accessible formats and wherever submissions could be made – in writing, verbally, in sign language, and online. The Commission then prepared a draft strategy for the second phase of consultation, in which it invited a range of disabled peoples organizations as well as the country’s Human Rights Commission. Their feedback helped the Commission to refine the accessibility initiatives proposed in the strategy.

Key Features

Existing accessibility initiatives of the Electoral Commission include that every enrolled voter is sent an EasyVote information pack; that election officials assess all voting places against access criteria; and that anyone can ask a friend, family member, or electoral official for help. Access 2020 goes beyond these efforts and aims foremost to enable voters with disabilities to cast a secret ballot. Telephone dictation voting was introduced in 2014 for those who are visually impaired or have another disability. Access 2020 focuses on making more information available in accessible formats so that everyone can access the Electoral Commission’s services in ways that meet their needs. In addition, Access 2020 recognizes the crucial relationship with the disability sector so that continuous consultations on improvement are carried out.

i Access 2020 Disability Strategy
Electoral Commission, New Zealand

Nominated by Ms. Cherish WILKINSON,
Electoral Commission, New Zealand

Sources: Electoral Commission’s Access 2020 Disability Strategy, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1pW1wna>
New Zealand’s Independent Monitoring Mechanism for the CRPD, Report Making disability rights real, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1v70zKF>



An electoral official assists a voter in a wheelchair to cast their vote at New Zealand’s 2014 general election

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

The last survey held, following the 2011 general election, showed a high level of awareness and approval of the measures that the Electoral Commission has undertaken to make the voting process more accessible.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

The Commission hosts a small group of international electoral officials in the few days preceding a general election. These officials have indicated a specific interest in New Zealand’s accessibility initiatives, particularly telephone dictation voting.

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Ensuring equal access for Members of Parliament

SOUTH AFRICA / NATIONAL PARLIAMENT

Persons with disabilities rarely become Members of Parliament; and if they do, they need equal access to all parliamentary facilities. South Africa has implemented steps that ensure the inclusiveness of its Parliament and that allow all Members with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others.

In brief

In 2006 and 2009, South Africa's Parliament introduced policies that contain extensive support measures for Members of Parliament and employees with disabilities. The provision of reasonable accommodation has led to measures that go beyond individual support and that benefit the whole Parliament. These include the establishment of institutionalised sign language interpreter services, a braille production unit, electronic text announcements, and more.

Innovative aspects

Covering costs for reasonable accommodation: Both policies cover the costs for 'reasonable accommodation', which means to appropriately modify and adjust so as to enable persons with disabilities to work as effectively as others. This concept is a core element of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Systematic removal of barriers: The provision of reasonable accommodation has led to measures

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial years: 2006 and 2009
- Currently, 3 of the 11 Members of Parliament (MP) with disabilities and 10 employees receive support, as so MPs who have children with disabilities.
- Parliament has purchased assistive devices for sports, work, and employee's personal development.
- Parliament is developing a database to collect more information on the reasonable accommodation needs of persons with disabilities.

that go beyond individual support and that include the establishment of institutionalised sign language interpreter services, a braille production unit, electronic text announcements, as well as additional travel benefits for Members of Parliament with disabilities or who have disabled family members.

Context

Before the policies were developed, persons with disabilities were clearly underrepresented in Parliament's membership and staff. To overcome underrepresentation and to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy equal access to all facilities of Parliament, policies were properly researched, drafted, and developed in consultation with MPs, about 950 employees, as well as disabled peoples organizations, such as Disabled

People South Africa, in order to be as inclusive as possible. It took about five years to finalize both policies. In 2006 the South African Parliament's Policy Management Unit approved the Policy on Facilities for Members with Special Needs and subsequently, in 2009, the Policy on Reasonable Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities. Both policies must be read in conjunction with the 1996 Constitution of South Africa and all relevant legislation, which includes, among others, the Employment Equity Act of 1998.

Key Features

The Parliament's Policy on Facilities for Members with Special Needs aims to enable Members with disabilities to participate effectively by providing them with the necessary facilities. Members with disabilities must inform the Chief Whip of their party of their needs, who in turn passes the requests to the Secretary of Parliament. The Secretary can provide for several facilities, contribute to the salary of assistants, or pay specialized transportation costs. The implementation is carried out by the Facilities Unit. The Policy on Reasonable Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities entitles employees to reasonable accommodation and facilities. Employees are responsible for informing their respective managers, and their disability status is kept confidential. While the Human Resource Executive implements this policy, the Policy Management Unit monitors its impact.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- By shifting the costs for reasonable accommodation to the Parliament, Members and employees with disabilities can achieve equal results in relation to participation and productivity.
- There is a long-term impact to the policies in terms of the progressive removal of physical barriers and increased access to parliamentary information and communication – e.g., braille documentation and specialised transport services.

The new South Africa should be accessible and open to everyone. We must see that we remove the obstacles. Only then will the rights of disabled persons to equal opportunities become a reality.

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

Other legislatures and government departments have used both policies as the basis to develop their own policies. Both policies can be easily replicated at the Cabinet, provincial, and local council executive level (public representatives) as well as by departments and other institutions.



Sign language service is provided at the Parliament of South Africa.

Policy on Facilities for Members with Special Needs & Policy on Reasonable Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities
National Parliament, South Africa

Nominated by Ms. Lidia PRETORIUS, Department of Social Development, South Africa

Sources: Policy on Facilities for Members with Special Needs, 2006: <http://bit.ly/1pVH9Xn>; The Policy on Reasonable Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities, 2009 is only available through the Parliament's intranet, but can be requested from Ms Bashe.

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Voting and participating in the electoral process

SPAIN / MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

Citizens with disabilities regularly encounter barriers that prevent them from voting and participating in electoral processes. To assist its citizens, Spain introduced two important regulations that eliminate a number of these barriers.

In brief

With its two regulations of 2007 and 2011, Spain has introduced for the first time a voting procedure for blind electors as well as basic conditions of accessibility and non-discrimination for persons with disabilities to participate in elections and political life. This latter legislation is a broader policy framework aimed at improving the implementation of participatory rights. It provides, for example, free sign language interpretation to members of polling stations and establishes that political parties need to ensure that their election materials are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Innovative aspects

Regulating electoral accessibility: While many accessibility measures were already being undertaken based on protocols, their legal regulation constitutes a new step in the process of ensuring the full exercise of the rights of citizens with disabilities.

Cooperating with the disability sector: A range of disability organizations is involved in implementation of the regulations, such as providing for sign language interpretation. Inductive Loops are provided for persons with hearing impairments, as well as accessible documents.

Consistent reporting: Following each election, evaluation reports on accessibility – prepared with input from provincial level election officials, disabled people organizations, and other stakeholders – are sent to the Central Electoral Commission; to the Ministry of Health, Social Services, and Equality; and to the National Disability Council.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Year: 2007
- Since 2008 special voting procedures have been in place for blind electors.
- In 2011, 21,434 buildings with polling stations were accessible; 8,726 provided free transport services; and 1,367 accessible voting kits and 81 support measures were provided.

Context

The Spanish legal framework reflects a concept of accessibility, which originates from the social model of disability and which recognizes people with disabilities as active subjects and citizens with rights. Royal Decree 1612/2007, providing for an accessible voting procedure for people with visual disabilities, is the result of a legal mandate included in the amendment of the Electoral Act. Disability organizations were invited to participate in the drafting process by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Health. Royal Decree 422/2011 implements Law No. 51 of 2003, which contained a mandate for the government to establish the basic conditions of accessibility and non-discrimination to be met by environments, products, and services necessary for the participation of people with disabilities in political and electoral processes.

Key Features

Under Royal Decree 1612/2007, voters with visual impairments have to inform the Minister of Interior of their special needs. The voter then receives documentation in braille and can use a standardized ballot. The Ministry has also to provide accessible information on candidates. Royal Decree 422/2011 provides that premises of polling stations, websites with electoral information, all institutional information and procedures, as well as spaces of election campaign must be accessible; and that deaf members of polling stations must receive free sign language interpretation. In addition, candidates, political parties, etc. shall ensure that their election campaign activities, election materials, public activities, websites, printed documentation, and the like are all accessible. To evaluate the implementation, the Ministry prepares a report after each national election.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- In 2011 over 200 accessibility improvements of polling stations were carried out (ramps, signage, etc.).
- In 2011 a substantial improvement in ensuring access to the exercise of the fundamental right to vote for persons with disabilities was reported by the Ministry.
- Of the total budget of €124,838,130 available for the Parliamentary Elections of November 2011, €508,415 was spent on accessibility.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

These policies are readily transferable to other countries. To date, Costa Rica has requested information about both regulations and about their implementation.



Accessible voting kits were ensure the exercise of the right to vote by secret ballot to all blind people who know Braille and who had previously requested it.

Full participation in political life implies rights and obligations. Persons with disabilities should be assisted to participate in the whole process, including as a member of a polling station.

Ignacio Tremiño, Ministry of Health, Social Services, and Equality

Royal Decree 1612/2007 on an Accessible Voting Procedure for People with Visual Disabilities & Royal Decree 422/2011 on the Conditions for the Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Political and Electoral Processes
Ministry of Interior, Spain

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Sources: Royal Decree 1612/2007, of 7th December: <http://bit.ly/1tQdzNC>; Royal Decree 422/2011, of 25th March: <http://bit.ly/1qHKjsm>; Ministry of Interior, Evaluation Report, 2012: <http://bit.ly/1tQ5qKY>

The right to a personal assistance budget

SWEDEN / SOCIALSTYRELSEN – NATIONAL BOARD OF HEALTH AND WELFARE

Many countries are still far from the goal of enabling persons with extensive disabilities to choose the support that best suits their needs. Sweden stands out in offering citizens a wide range of alternatives and control over the services they need, including the right to a Personal Assistance Budget.

In brief

Sweden is one of the few countries that legally entitles persons with severe disabilities to a personal assistance budget (PAB). This monthly sum from the National Social Insurance covers 100 percent of service costs, and enables individuals themselves to purchase self-directed personal assistance services from public and private entities. The amount of the PAB is independent of the individual's or the family's finances. Notably, the policy has created a demand-driven market for personal assistance where providers compete for customers on the basis of service quality.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Year: 1993
- In 2013 some 19,500 people received a personal assistance budget.
- 98 percent of recipients pointed to personal assistance as the most important factor for their quality of life.
- By 2014, 230 local governments and over 800 private entities offered personal assistance services on a competitive basis.

Competition-neutral direct payments: The personal assistance budget goes to the user and is granted in the form of assistance hours, which are based on the individual's needs, instead of the type of service provider.

Promoting equality in living conditions: Sweden's citizens with extensive disabilities no longer need to live in institutions to receive services. They are free to choose where and how to live. By choosing their individual solutions, they can make their own plans and

Context

The disability movement was the main force in bringing about the Act Concerning Support and Service to Persons with Certain Functional Impairments and the Assistance Benefit Act, which were enacted by the Swedish Parliament in 1993 as part of a broader disability policy reform. Previously, persons with extensive needs for daily living were deeply dissatisfied with the

municipal community-based home-helper or semi-institutional cluster home services, in which they had no influence. Many different, often unfamiliar, workers would come and assist with even the most intimate tasks. The reform, inspired by the Independent Living philosophy, enables individuals to customize services according to their particular needs, with maximum control over everyday life. The need for personal assistance, however, grew faster than expected, and therefore the law and its interpretation have been amended many times.

Key Features

With the provision of ten measures for special support, including the right to a personal assistance budget, Sweden enshrined the right to "good" living conditions for persons with major and permanent physical, mental, and intellectual impairments. The personal assistance budget is granted in the form of assistance hours, which are based on the individual's needs. The budget can cover up to 24 hours a day/7 days a week, and can even be used for more than one personal assistant, if needed. A monthly sum from the National Social Insurance covers 100 percent of service costs and goes directly to the users who, with maximum self-determination, can contract providers of their choice (municipality, company, or cooperative) or employ assistants by themselves (by starting their own private company). The amount funded for 2013 was SEK275 (about €28) per hour.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- Sweden's citizens with extensive disabilities are free to choose where and how to live. About 90 percent live in ordinary homes, either alone or together with a partner, a housemate, or parents.
- Approximately 80,000 people work as personal assistants – 2 percent of the labour force.
- Taxpayers have saved an estimated €3 billion since 1994, compared to the costs of home-helper services.



One of STIL's staff with her personal assistant

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

In several countries similar legislation has either been enacted or is under discussion, including Belgium, Finland, Germany, Norway, and the United Kingdom. In 2004 the Swedish law served as the basis for developing a model policy for personal assistance.

Independent Living means having the same range of options and the same degree of self-determination that non-disabled people take for granted.

Dr. Adolf Ratzka, Independent Living Institute

Innovative aspects

Legal right: The legislation established special support measures, including personal assistance, as legal rights that are independent from state or local government budgets.

i The Act concerning Support and Service to Persons with certain Functional Impairments & the Assistance Benefit Act, Socialstyrelsen The National Board of Health & Welfare, Sweden

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Nominated by Ms. Jamie BOLLING, European Network on Independent Living, Sweden

Sources: Bengt Westerberg, Personal Assistance – a revolution for people with disabilities, 2013: <http://bit.ly/1xxf2OR>
Kenneth Westberg et al., Personal Assistance in Sweden, 2010: <http://bit.ly/1qDNlby>

Personal Ombudsmen in Sweden

SWEDEN / SOCIALSTYRELSEN – NATIONAL BOARD OF HEALTH AND WELFARE

Guardianship, hospitalization, institutionalization, powerlessness, isolation, drug addiction, homelessness, suicide, and violence are among the negative situations and conditions that the Swedish system of Personal Ombudsman helps to prevent – proving to be a true ‘change maker’ in the lives of many persons with disabilities.

In brief

In 2000, Sweden established a nationwide system of Personal Ombudsmen that provides support in decision-making for persons with severe mental or psychosocial disabilities. Personal Ombudsmen (POs) are highly skilled persons who do outreach work and establish trusting relationships with individuals in need of support. They assist individuals in taking control of their own situation, identify care needs, and ensure that these individuals receive the necessary help. POs have no medical responsibility, nor do they make any decisions in the capacity of an authority; they work only to represent the individuals they assist.

Innovative aspects

Empowerment: A PO makes contact with persons living in isolation and poverty. As many individuals with severe psychosocial disabilities are very suspicious, the PO has to reach them step-by-step by developing a channel of communication, establishing a relationship, starting a dialogue, and gaining their trust.

Accessibility: There is no complicated formal procedure to enlist the support of a PO, since many psychiatric patients would back out of the process if they had to sign forms. Instead, they simply need to ask for help.

Peaceful resolution of conflict: Prior to having a PO, many individuals are angry about their social environment because of past bad experiences. POs help to solve most conflicts: with neighbours, with family, with psychiatry, and with social services.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Year: 2000
- In 2014, 310 POs provided support to more than 6,000 individuals.
- In 2014, 245 municipalities (84 percent) included POs in their social service system.
- A 2005 study reported that individuals with disabilities who are supported by a PO require less care and that their psychosocial situation improves.

Context

While the PO scheme has drawn on models found in the United States and the United Kingdom, it differs considerably from these. From 1995 to 1998 the government funded ten pilot projects, of which several were run by municipalities, some were set up by civil society, and one (PO- Skåne) was set up by an organization of persons who formerly used institutional and psychiatric care. As the pilot project evaluation showed both good qualitative and quantitative outcomes, the Parliament decided in 2000 to expand permanently the PO system to the whole country. A 2005 study reported that the scheme is profitable in socioeconomic terms since individuals with PO support require less care and their psychosocial situation improves. As a result, the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen) began to promote the PO as a new social profession. In 2013 a new regulation entered into force that established permanent funding for the PO system.

Key Features

A PO holds an independent position in a municipality's social services system and supports individuals who have a complex need of care due to a psychiatric disability. The first step of a PO is to establish a trusting relationship, which means he or she must be 100 percent on the side of the individual even if the individual's interests should run counter to the opinions of other professionals. It is common for the individual to establish contact with a PO, or for the relevant social or psychiatric services to do so, or that it takes place through a user organization. Once trust is established, the PO maps the client needs. As a third step, the PO and the client draw up a joint action plan. Usually, POs work for municipalities; in some places they work for foundations, voluntary or care associations, or even businesses. In general, two or three POs work together, each serving about 15 clients a year.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- PO operations reduce costs by approximately €80,000 per assisted person over a five-year period.
- In 2013 a new regulation included the PO system in the regular welfare system.
- A 2014 report states that Swedish local governments see the PO system as a natural part of the services that are expected to be offered in a municipality.
- The National Board of Health and Welfare promotes the PO as a new social profession.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

The PO project began in Oslo in 2010 and became a regular service in 2014, and it is also operating in Helsinki. Moreover, in 2014 the Czech Republic announced that it will soon provide such services as well.

i Establishing a Nationwide System of Personal Ombudsmen
Socialstyrelsen – The National Board of Health & Welfare, Sweden

Nominated by Mr. Maths JESPERSON, Sweden

Sources: World Bank and World Health Organization, World Report on Disability, 2011: <http://bit.ly/1yzlVO1>
Socialstyrelsen, A New Profession is Born – Personligt ombud, PO, 2008: <http://bit.ly/1v3t2RE>



Image from the video “Paving the way to recovery – the Personal Ombudsman System”

The PO does not act according to what he or she thinks is for the client's own good. The PO only carries out what the client tells him or her to do.

Maths Jespersen, PO-Skåne

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Reserved elected seats for persons with disabilities

UGANDA / PARLIAMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Around the world persons with disabilities are underrepresented in public life, but this is not the case in Uganda. The country legislated that elected political bodies at all levels must reserve a minimum number of seats for representatives of persons with disabilities.

In brief

Uganda's Constitution of 1995 rules that the State shall ensure fair representation of marginalized groups – including persons with disabilities – on all government bodies. As a result, legislators have passed several acts to increase the representation of persons with disabilities in the public sphere. Parliament has reserved five seats for Members who represent persons with disabilities; and every village, parish, sub-county, and district council has to include at least one man and one woman with a disability. Uganda's 47,000 representatives with disabilities are easily the largest group of politicians with disabilities in the world.

Innovative aspects

Direct Representation: Only a few countries provide for direct representation of persons with disabilities at all levels of government.

Uganda's special system of directly elected representatives with disabilities is the reason why parliamentarians with disabilities are now also elected via the mainstream electoral system.

Hon. Ndeezi ALEX, Member of Parliament for Persons with Disabilities – Central Region

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Years: 1995, 1996, 1997
- At each term since 1995 at least five parliamentarians with disabilities from four regions (Central, East, West, North) and one national woman with disability representative have been elected.
- In 2011 a total of 12 parliamentarians with disabilities were elected.
- Uganda has some 47,000 representatives with disabilities – or some 0.5 percent of the registered electorate – at the local and district level.

Use of Electoral College: The Electoral College, which ensures a minimum political representation of persons with disabilities in Parliament and local authorities, stretches from the village to the national level and is composed only of persons with disabilities. In addition, there is an emphasis on the principle of gender balance.

Context

For a long time persons with disabilities remained excluded from political decision-making bodies in Uganda, which in turn reinforced their exclusion through the absence of policies favouring them. In 1987 the newly formed National Union of Disabled Persons (NUDIPU) started to challenge the inconsistencies in policy-making. NUDIPU was the key driver for the



Hon. Asamo Hellen Grace, one of Uganda's parliamentarians representing persons with disabilities of Eastern Uganda in Parliament, speaking at a conference on disability & HIV and AIDS, organised by National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda

inclusion of the Hon. Eliphaz Mazima as a representative with disabilities in the Constitution's drafting committee. Hon. Mazima achieved the inclusion of disability in the Constitution of 1995. Since then many laws have operationalized the constitutional provisions, including the Parliamentary Elections Statute of 1996 and the Local Governments Act of 1997, both of which ensure the representation of persons with disabilities in all political elected bodies. Through this representation mechanism, as well as the National Council for Disability, disabled peoples organizations are directly involved in the development and monitoring of policies.

Key Features

Uganda's Constitution requires that Parliament shall consist of a number of representatives of persons with disabilities, and the State shall ensure fair representation of marginalized groups on all bodies. As a result, Uganda has enacted the Parliamentary Elections Statute of 1996 that provides for five seats in Parliament for representatives of persons with disabilities, elected by a national Electoral College. This College is composed of district representatives, four from each district. In this way persons with disabilities elect their representatives through an electoral

college composed only of persons with disabilities. Uganda has also enacted the Local Governments Act of 1997, which provides for the allocation of a certain number of seats for people with disabilities in elected political bodies at all levels – from village, to parish, to sub-county, to district council.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- In 1998 the State Minister for the Elderly and Disability Affairs was created.
- Since 2008 parliamentarians with disabilities have also been elected through the mainstream electoral process.
- Members of Parliament with disabilities have been successful in ensuring that their concerns were addressed in several major laws, including the Children's Statute of 1996.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

A number of delegations from other countries, including Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, and Swaziland, have visited Uganda to learn about its reserved seats for persons with disabilities. Kenya adopted a similar provision in 2011, but there the party chooses the representatives with disabilities.

i Constitution, Parliamentary Elections Statute & Local Governments Act
Parliament, local governments, Uganda

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Nominated by Mr. Martin Babu MWESIGWA, CRPD Committee & National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda

Sources: Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995: <http://bit.ly/1u5eYmv>;
Uganda's Local Governments Act, 1997: <http://bit.ly/1yC5wrX>; Uganda's Parliamentary Elections Act, 2005: <http://bit.ly/1rZITjM>

Funding for running for an elected office

UNITED KINGDOM / GOVERNMENT EQUALITIES OFFICE, ADMINISTERED BY CONVEY

In most countries people with disabilities are underrepresented in public life because they face substantial barriers to putting themselves forward for election. In the United Kingdom grants are available to help meet the additional costs associated with running for election that candidates with disabilities can face.

In brief

The Access to Elected Office for Disabled People Fund, established in 2012, offers individual grants of between £250 and (only in exceptional circumstances) £40,000 (about €320 to €49,700) to persons with disabilities who wish to put themselves forward as a candidate or for running their election campaign, but who incur additional costs associated with their disability. While the Fund was initially set to run until March 2014, the government decided to extend it until March 2015 and to fully evaluate it by summer 2015.

Innovative aspects

Towards a level playing field: By funding the disability-related costs associated with standing for selection and election, the Fund enables candidates with disabilities to better compete with other candidates.

Cooperation with civil society: The fund is an excellent example of a government working with civil society to develop an evidence-informed approach to removing barriers to the political participation of persons with disabilities.

Testing cost-effectiveness: Launched as a three-year pilot project, the Fund is the first of its kind, and its effectiveness will be evaluated in June 2015.

Context

In 2010 a House of Commons Conference on parliamentary representation stated that there is considerable evidence that the financial barriers facing candidates with disabilities were particularly high; that the necessary extra spending has to be borne by candidates who are often poorer than other candidates; and that social care funding packages limit the area

FACTS & FIGURES

- Initial Year: 2012
- The Fund's website is fully accessible and contains guidance for applicants and others.
- A publication of case stories of disabled people who are active in politics has been produced.
- As of 2014 the Fund had supported 50 persons with disabilities to put themselves forward as a candidate.
- The average value of claims has been £4,289 (€5,390).

in which persons with disabilities can be candidates. While assistance to Members of Parliament can be provided through the Access to Work programme (Innovative Policy 2013) it is not available to candidates. In response, the disability charity Scope recommended establishing a fund to meet the cost of reasonable adjustments during campaigns. As a result, a Stakeholder Group, chaired by the Government Equalities Office and including the main political parties as well as a variety of disability organizations, developed the Access to Elected Office for Disabled People Fund, launched in 2012.

Key Features

The Fund offers individual grants of between £250 and, only in exceptional circumstances, £40,000 to candidates with disabilities. Grants can cover, for

example, the cost of using private taxis if public transport is not accessible, the cost of accessible meeting rooms, or the cost of a sign language interpreter. In order to be eligible, the person with a disability needs to demonstrate that the nature of their condition creates a barrier to standing for election and to provide evidence of their involvement in community activities. The Fund is administered by Convey, which is independent of the government and assesses all applications and pays grants. Convey is advised by an advisory panel, which consists of members – including four with a disability – who have expertise in a range of disability and electoral issues. The monitoring and evaluation is carried out by the Government Equalities Office.

Outcome, impact, and effectiveness

- The Fund was initially set to run until March 2014, but the government decided to extend it until March 2015 and to evaluate it by summer 2015.
- 35 applicants have stood for election to date, mainly in Local Authority elections.
- The Fund has received considerable media coverage, and has been promoted through political networks and disability charities to raise awareness of the support it can provide.

Transferability, scalability, and cost-efficiency

Depending on the outcome of the pilot period of the Fund, it could, in principle, be replicated in other countries, depending on their laws regarding limits on electoral expenses for candidates. Start-up costs were approximately £30,000 (€38,000).

THE STORY OF KIRSTEN HEARN

“As a blind person, there are many barriers put up to stop me from participating in society.”

Kirsten Hearn, who is partially sighted and who was able to run for elections thanks to the Access to Elected Office for Disabled People Fund, is an elected Councillor at the Haringey Council. For her it is clear that “as a blind person, there are many barriers put up to stop me from participating in society. This is reflected in how political parties organize and how would-be politicians campaign. Canvassing on the doorsteps and streets is expected of candidates, but this is not easy to do if you are disabled. In order to run a good campaign, I must keep abreast of local issues and research policy areas so I can say what I will do when I am elected. This is hard when information is very inaccessible. If I am to have an equal chance of being nominated and of participating as a candidate, this is the kind of support I need.”

The Access to Elected Office Fund was a lifeline to me as it enabled me to fund a support worker to accompany me when I went out canvassing and met residents and community groups.

Alison HANSFORD, former Local Council candidate

i Access to Elected Office for Disabled People Fund
Government Equalities Office, administered by Convey, United Kingdom

Nominated by Ms. Ruth MARVEL,
Scope, United Kingdom

Sources: Government Equalities Office, Policy Paper Political Life: Disabled People's Stories: <http://bit.ly/1uGFqn7>
House of Commons, 2010 report into Parliamentary Representation: <http://bit.ly/1tcXBRQ>

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Success stories of Innovative Policies 2014

Since 2013 the Zero Project has celebrated Innovative Policies from around the world – nominating, researching, and selecting the “best of the best” with an annual thematic focus. Below, we briefly “revisit” some of the Innovative Policies of 2014, which focused on the theme “accessibility” and provide updates on their progress and success.

Berlin’s mandatory barrier free construction (Germany)



Berlin’s administration has published comprehensive handbooks on barrier-free construction, which have been developed in consultation with civil society and are mandatory for all Berlin state construction projects. They aim to be simple and intuitive, give orientation for the planning process, and provide concrete assistance to update existing construction codes. On 17 March 2014, Berlin’s general instruction for the preparation and execution of construction measures (ABau) was revised and entered into force. ABau describes the processes from the initial needs assessment, to the planning stage, to the ultimate execution of construction. A newly developed “Concept Accessible” guide will ensure that the principles of Design for All will be translated into the whole planning process for new constructions, alterations, and extensions as well as for modernizations. Read more at www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/bauen/barrierefreies_bauen/download/Konzept_Barrierefrei_en.pdf



Kuala Lumpur’s implementation framework for its accessibility standards, Malaysia

The City of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, has set up an implementation framework for its accessibility standards for all newly built environments, including a comprehensive monitoring and enforcement system from design to post-construction. Throughout the last year, Kuala Lumpur City Hall staff members have continued to work with the national standard-setting body to finalize the guidelines for “Using Universal Design in the Built Environment.” On 1 December 2014 the Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation, Dr. Ewon Ebin, launched the revised national Universal Design and Accessibility in Built Environment Code of Practice (known as MS 1184). The revised standards aim to encourage more architects, town planners, designers, and regulators – especially at the local city council level – to refer to them as one of their guidelines in order to create a better quality of life for Malaysians with disabilities. To date, Kuala Lumpur City Hall is the first city hall that has made MS 1184 a requirement for construction.



The Universal Access Policy of Cape Town’s MyCiTi bus system (South Africa)

Cape Town’s MyCiTi system is, along with Johannesburg’s Rea Vaya, among the first South African Bus Rapid Transit systems. Cape Town, however, clearly stands out for its commitment and ability to implement accessibility, as its Universal Access Policy is a comprehensive long-term and multi-level effort that includes universal design and attention to the entire journey. At the end of 2013, Cape Town announced the start of a comprehensive three-year universal access audit of all transport facilities in the city, to be undertaken by persons with disabilities. The audit of all major central business districts and 220 public transport interchanges started in February 2014. The transport authority for Cape Town is working to ensure that all transport operators provide universal access and that this will be included in the list of requirements for operators applying for licenses. Transport for Cape Town will also regulate operator compliance. Read more at <https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/TransportCapeTown/Pages/Dialaride.aspx>.

Accessibility Policy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games (UK)

The Olympics and Paralympics are among the world’s most spectacular sporting events and represent a massive opportunity to spread a message to a vast audience. London 2012 approached the Olympic and Paralympic Games for the first time as one event with exemplary accessibility as a key theme and set a high standard for all events to come. Currently, its best practices are being transferred, as far as possible. One of the key experts behind London 2012 Accessibility Policy was Mark Todd, who currently works as Accessibility Expert to the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Games and the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and who also advises the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the Spanish Paralympic Committee. For more, see <http://theaccessarea.com>



Uganda’s mandatory accessibility standards

Uganda is among the first sub-Saharan countries to have developed their own accessibility standards. At the time we finalized the Zero Project Report, the standards were already mandatory for school construction projects, but not yet for all construction projects. With the entering into force of the Building Control Act at the end of 2013, the accessibility standards became a requirement for the approval of all construction projects nationwide. Further, in May 2014 the Uganda National Action on Physical Disability officially launched the Accessibility Improvement Project, funded by the Disability Rights Fund. The main aim of this project is to raise awareness about the Building Control Act, which guides the construction industry, and to ensure that the while the Ministry of Works and Transports develops the regulations for the Act, the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities are well incorporated. More can be read at <http://unapd.org/general/accessibility-improvement-project-launched>

Australia’s Development for All: Towards a Disability-inclusive Australian Aid Program

Australia is one of the few countries that have mainstreamed disability into their development programming. Its Development for All: Towards a Disability-inclusive Australian Aid Program is about improving the reach and effectiveness of development assistance by ensuring that people with disabilities are included in, contribute to, and benefit equally from development efforts. The Australian government, elected in 2013, announced on 3 December 2013 its intention to develop a new strategy for disability-inclusive development for 2015 and beyond, building on the successes of the previous strategy. The new disability strategy is being developed in consultation with key stakeholders in partner countries and in Australia. Read more at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/aid/topics/development-issues/disability-inclusive-development/Pages/disability-inclusive-development.aspx>

Annex

Questionnaire

The full questionnaire, analysis per question and a list of all answers

Policies

List of all 39 Innovative Policies and brief description, listed by country

Practices

List of all 39 Innovative Practices, list by country

Network

The Reseach Network and acknowledgements to all contributors

Social Indicators of the Zero Project – the full questionnaire

1. NEWLY CONSTRUCTED BUILDINGS

Are all newly constructed buildings, to which there is public access, required by law to be accessible to all persons with disabilities?

Accessibility should be based on widely known and respected sets of criteria. This ensures both that it meets the interest of all persons with disabilities, and that it conforms to the highest standards. And it refers not only to the built environment itself but also to signage in Braille and in easy to read and understand forms. Buildings to which there is public access include not only municipal buildings, but also, for example, cinemas, supermarkets, banks, schools, shops, sport and leisure facilities (e.g. museums) etc. What remedies exists if the law is contravened? If there is no legislation, is it planned?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 9 (Accessibility)

- **Yes.** Legislation is in place and covers both all newly constructed buildings to which there is public access and covers all disabilities.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** There is legislation only for certain newly constructed buildings. Or the law covers only certain disabilities.
- **No.** There is no such legislation.
- **N/A /other.**

2. TIME FRAME FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS

Is there a legal time frame for all existing buildings, to which there is public access, to be made accessible to all persons with disabilities?

Accessibility should be based on widely known and respected sets of criteria. This ensures both that it meets the interest of all persons with disabilities, and that it conforms to the highest standards. And it refers not only to the built environment itself but also to signage. If there is legislation in place, what is the timeframe for all existing buildings to be accessible to all persons with disabilities? If there is no timeframe set by legislation, is it planned? And if so, when is it expected to enter into law - if at all?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 9 (Accessibility)

- **Yes.** There is a legal time frame for all existing buildings, to which there is public access, to be made fully accessible to all persons with disabilities.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Not all buildings are included. Or the law may only apply to the courts or public administration buildings. Or the law covers only certain disabilities.
- **No.** There is no timeframe set by legislation.
- **N/A /other.**

3. URBAN TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Are all urban public transports (bus, metro, tram, train) accessible to all persons with disabilities?

Any exceptions qualify for 'Yes – with Qualifications'. Accessibility must, however, include both blind persons and those persons with mental or intellectual disabilities. A very important issue here is that drivers (especially bus drivers) are both trained, and obliged personally, to help, if required, a person with disabilities. Wheelchair users should be able to enter and leave buses without assistance. If 'Yes – with Qualifications', please indicate why. If "Yes" please describe any significant differences between the legal situation and the reality of everyday life.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 9 (Accessibility)

- **Yes.** All urban public transports are accessible to all persons with disabilities.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Some urban public transports are not accessible to all persons with disabilities. Or they are accessible only to persons with certain disabilities. Or they are mainly accessible in the State capital. Or drivers lack of trainings.
- **No.** Urban public transports are not accessible to persons with disabilities.
- **N/A /other.**

4. EMERGENCY EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

In a situation of risk, is the state's early warning system accessible to all persons with disabilities?

Systems that could be in place include: city lights, SMS-services, email services etc. But any existing system should not be limited to either radio or public address systems/ sirens - in line with the two-sense principle. "Situation of risk" includes situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 11 (Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies)

- **Yes.** The state's early warning system is accessible to all persons with disabilities.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** The early warning system is accessible only to those with certain disabilities, for example hearing disabilities, or only at certain times of day.
- **No.** The early warning system has not been designed to be accessible to persons with disabilities.
- **N/A /other.**

5. SIGN LANGUAGE RECOGNITION

Is sign language an officially recognized language in the courts?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 13 (Access to justice)

- **Yes.** Sign language is both an official language of the courts and persons with a hearing impairment have the right to a translator paid for by the state.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Sign language is only officially recognized in some courts. Or those with a hearing impairment do not have the right to a translator. Or a translator is not paid for by the state. Or only by custom are translators made available, and paid for, by the state.
- **No.** Sign language is not recognized in the courts, those with a hearing impairment have the right neither to a translator, nor for any translator to be paid for by the state and translators are, even by custom, neither made available nor paid for by the state.
- **N/A /other.**

6. PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITES

Is there a legal requirement for public sector bodies' websites and websites of publicly available services in your country to be accessible to all persons with disabilities? "Public sector bodies" means the State, regional or local authorities, bodies or associations governed by public law. "Websites of publicly available services" means a website used to deliver a service made available to the public. For instance, educational establishments, leisure services employment services, health care, mutual services, etc. 'Web-accessible' means a website or web-based service (including those designed for mobile devices and/or use) which is easy to browse, navigate, understand, operate, interact with and use safely, securely, independently, and with dignity by a person with a disability under all circumstances (including emergency cases).If "Yes" or "Yes, with qualifications" please describe any significant differences between the legal situation and the reality of everyday life.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 9 (Accessibility),

No. 21 (Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information)

- **Yes.** Legal provisions and enforcements/sanctions are in place.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Legal provisions exist, but are not enforced, or there is no way to address website owners when a site is not accessible.
- **No.** There is no local legal enforcement and/or there are no sanctions on inaccessibility.
- **N/A /other.**

7. INCLUSIVE PRIMARY EDUCATION

Does a person with disability have the right to receive free and compulsory primary education within the mainstream educational system?

Persons with disabilities must not be excluded from mainstream education - whether primary or secondary. Mainstream education must be both inclusive and of quality. All necessary support must be provided to ensure full and effective inclusion. This question refers to children and also to adults with disabilities who lacked the opportunities when they were young. Please describe any significant

differences between the legal situation and the reality of everyday life.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 24 (Education)

- **Yes.** Every child with a disability has the right to receive free and compulsory primary education within the mainstream educational system.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Only children with certain disabilities have such a right, others must attend special schools. Or the right is restricted only to certain schools in an area. Or children can go to any school, but at that school are required to attend special, separate, classes.
- **No.** No child with a disability has the right to receive free and compulsory primary education within the mainstream educational system.
- **N/A /other.**

8. ALTERNATIVE TESTING METHODS FOR STUDENTS

Do university students with disabilities have access to alternative testing methods?

This question refers only to university students. In the US, for example, some universities offer courses that require students to sit no exams - their performance is measured by way of course work, assignments etc. Please describe what measures, if any, are being taken to provide alternative testing methods to those with disabilities?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 24 (Education)

- **Yes.** At all universities, students with disabilities have access alternative testing methods.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** There is access only at some universities. Or the choice of alternative testing methods is restricted to persons only with certain disabilities.
- **No.** At not one university is there access to alternative testing methods.
- **N/A /other.**

9. DATA ON UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

Are official statistics published covering the number of persons with disabilities who graduate from university (and tertiary education in general)?

Please describe, if possible, how identification of such students has been made as, for example, many students with invisible disabilities choose not to self-identify at university level.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 24 (Education),

No. 31 (Statistics and data collection)

- **Yes.** These figures are published officially annually within the year.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** These figures are published, but maybe not officially, or annually. Or within the year.
- **No.** No such statistics are officially published. Or are even available.
- **N/A /other.**

10. ACCOMMODATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Does the state oblige employers to take the necessary action on accommodations made in the work place for all employees with disabilities?

For employees with disabilities both to work, and to work effectively for their employers, such accommodations will need to be made in the work place. Obliging such action on the part of employers should go a long way not only to ensuring both, but also to ensuring that persons with disabilities are properly included in the workforce If employers are required to take, in particular, any specific actions, please describe what these are.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 27 (Work and Employment)

- **Yes.** Employers are obliged to take the necessary action on accommodations made in the work place for all employees with disabilities.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** The action that needs to be taken may be limited. Or certain disabilities may be excluded etc. Or only for a certain number of disabled employees, etc.
- **No.** No such obligation exists.
- **N/A /other.**

11. DATA ON STATE EMPLOYMENT

Is the number of persons with disabilities employed by the state both calculated and published?

While the question is about the availability of this figure, the figure itself is also important. If such a figure is available, please provide it, together with a source and, if possible, an internet link.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 27 (Work and Employment), No. 31 (Statistics and data collection)

- **Yes.** The figure is published annually in an official publication, together with some description covering in which state bodies these persons are employed.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Such a figure may be calculated, but is not published. Or it is not an official figure. Or it is only published either irregularly or every, say, five years.
- **No.** Such a figure is neither calculated nor published.
- **N/A /other.**

12. INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT

Did the percentage of persons with disabilities employed increase in calendar year 2012?

The question refers only to employment in companies that are required by law to employ persons with disabilities. The answer is 'No' if no figures are available. Without figures it is impossible to know if people with disabilities are, in fact, being employed as required. If such a figure is available, please provide the figure, a source and, if possible, an internet link.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 27 (Work and Employment), No. 31 (Statistics and data collection)

- **Yes.** The percentage increased. Or the percentage has not increased because all companies required by law to employ persons with disabilities actually do so.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** The percentage remained the same.
- **No.** The percentage decreased. Or no figures are available.
- **N/A /other.**

13. DATA ON EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT (Art.31)

Are official statistics about the education and employment of persons with disabilities published at least every 10 years?

This question refers only to whether such statistics are published or not, and to their quality. It does not refer to what the statistics actually tell us about one state in contrast with another - based on those statistics. That is, it simply asks whether such statistics are collected and, additionally, if so, what is their quality?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 24 (Education), No. 27 (Work and Employment), No. 31 (Statistics and data collection)

- **Yes.** In the last 10 years, at least one official study has been undertaken, and the results published, that provides a clear picture of both the education and employment of persons with disabilities.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Only certain figures are available. Or figures are older than 10 years. Or figures are open to interpretation.
- **No.** No such official study has ever been undertaken.
- **N/A /other.**

14. UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION EXISTING AND FUNDED

Is there an umbrella organization representing, at minimum, 50% of all those associations for persons with disabilities, that receives directly basic public funding?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 32 (International cooperation)

- **Yes.** Such an organization exists, represents over 50% of all those associations for persons with disabilities and receives directly basic public funding.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Such an organization exists, but, for example, does not either represent over 50% of all those associations for persons with disabilities, or receive directly basic public funding.
- **No.** No such organization exists that represents over 50%, and that receives directly basic public funding.
- **N/A /other.**

15. CRPD FOCAL POINTS INSTALLED

If the state has signed, or ratified, the Convention, has it designated 'focal points' within government to address matters relating to the Convention's implementation?

For those states that have ratified the Convention, in line with Article 33, Paragraph 1, 'State Parties' need to designate one or more 'focal points' within government 'for matters relating to the implementation' of the Convention.

In addition, in line with the other two paragraphs in this article, there need not only to be 'independent mechanisms' to 'promote, protect and monitor' its implementation, but also 'civil society' needs to be involved and participate 'fully' in the monitoring process. A 'Yes' means both that 'focal points' have been designated and meet regularly, and that civil society is involved and participates 'fully' in the process of monitoring the state's implementation of the convention. A 'Qualified/Partial' response means that some, but not all, focal points may be in place, or that they do not meet regularly or have not met in the last 12 months. Or that they may exist, but that civil society may not yet be involved. A 'No' means that there are neither any focal points nor is there any involvement by civil society.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 33 (National implementation and monitoring)

- **Yes.** There are 'focal points', they are effective and civil society is fully involved
- **Yes, with qualifications.** There are focal points, but, for example, civil society does not participate 'fully' in monitoring the state's implementation of the convention.
- **No.** State parties have not yet designated one focal point within government for such matters. (Or: State has not signed the convention).
- **N/A /other.**

16. UN CRPD ACCESSIBLE FORMAT

Is an audio version, a sign language translation and a plain language version of the Convention available on an official state website, in all official languages of the country?

Plain Language has to include symbols and pictures for easier understanding.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 49 (Accessible Format)

- **Yes.** An audio version, a sign language translation and a plain language version of the Convention are available on an official state website, in all official languages of the country.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Only one or two of the three are available on an official state website, or not in all official languages.
- **No.** None is available on an official state website. (Or: State has not signed the Convention).
- **N/A /other.**

Focus on Independent Living

17. SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING ALTERNATIVES

Are supported decision-making alternatives available to all persons with disabilities?

A supported decision-making regime comprises various support options which give primacy to a person's will and preferences and respect human rights norms. It should provide protection for all rights, including those related to autonomy (right to legal capacity, right to equal recognition before the law, right to choose where to live, etc.) and rights related to freedom from abuse and ill-treatment (right to life, right to physical integrity, etc.). This distinguishes supported decision-making from substituted decision-making, where the guardian or tutor has court-authorized power to make decisions on behalf of the individual without necessarily having to demonstrate that those decisions are in the individual's best interest or according to his/her wishes. States' obligation to replace substitute decision-making regimes by supported decision-making requires both the abolition of substitute decision-making regimes and the development of supported decision-making alternatives.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 12 (Equal recognition before the law), No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community)

- **Yes.** Supported decision-making alternatives are available to all persons with disabilities and measures to provide access to the support required are in place.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Supported decision-making alternatives are available but not to all persons with disabilities or their realization is not effective due to the lack of adequate support.
- **No.** Supported decision-making alternatives are not available.
- **N/A /other.**

18. SAFEGUARDS

Do appropriate and effective safeguards exist for all processes relating to legal capacity and support in exercising legal capacity?

Safeguards must be present in a system of support in the exercise of legal capacity. The primary purpose of these safeguards must be to ensure the respect of the person's

rights, will and preferences. In order to accomplish this, the safeguards must provide protection from abuse on an equal basis with others.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 12 (Equal recognition before the law), No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community)

- **Yes.** Appropriate and effective safeguards exist for all processes relating to legal capacity.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Safeguards exist but not for all processes or they are not appropriate and/or effective.
- **No.** Safeguards do not exist.
- **N/A /other.**

19. RIGHT TO MARRIAGE AND HAVE CHILDREN

Do persons with disabilities have the same rights as others to marry, have children and raise those children?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 23 (Respect for home and the family), No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community)

- **Yes.** The rights of people with disabilities are in no way restricted with regard to any, and all, of these.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** The rights of people with are restricted with regard to one or two of these.
- **No.** The rights of people with disabilities are restricted with regard to all of these.
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT If the answer is either 'No' or 'Yes – with Qualifications', please describe the exceptions, particularly the most egregious, (for example, persons with disabilities being sterilized against their will or having their children taken away. Or, a marriage being prohibited for 'health reasons').

20. DATA COLLECTION ON INSTITUTIONS

Are official statistics published annually covering, at the minimum, the number, age group, gender ethnicity and primary disability for all persons with disabilities living in residential care settings?

This question refers only to official statistics and only to "institutions". The official figures need to cover all types of residential care where persons with disabilities live together in a group. These include: social care institutions (also referred to as centres for placement and rehabilitation etc.), psychiatric institutions (also referred to as asylums), boarding schools for children, orphanages, sheltered housing, group homes, old people's homes and all other forms of residential care, so that all forms of residential care are covered., etc. As important as whether such data are available is their quality. If they are available, are they of acceptable quality?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 31 (Statistics and data collection)

- **Yes.** All this information is available and is to be found in an official publication or an official website, published on an annual basis with figures not older than one year.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Some of this information is available. Figures are not published annually, or are over a year old when published. Figures cover only selected institutions.
- **No.** No such statistics are officially published.
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT Please comment on data collection, if there is any, and also if the data collection respects the right to data privacy, which is important in this instance.

21. ALTERNATIVES TO INSTITUTIONS AND DECISION-MAKING

If forms of residential care exist in your country, are there any alternatives to institutions and do people with disabilities have choice and control over the services they use?

The question is about whether people with disabilities in your country are able to choose between different types of services in the community, or some people have no option but to live in an institution. Safeguards should exist to ensure that no one is placed into residential or institutional care unless this is their own preference. People living in institutions should be provided with the necessary support to move back into the community. No one should be forced to live in an institution just because there are no other alternatives available to the community, or because this is their families' preference.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community)

- **Yes.** Alternatives to institutions exist and persons with disabilities have always choice and control over the services they use.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Institutions are the predominant forms of care and/or people with disabilities have par-

tially the choice and control over the services they use.

- **No.** Institutions are the only forms of care and/or people with disabilities have no choice and no control over the services they use.
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT If placement in residential settings is the predominant form of care for people with disabilities in your country please comment, if existing, on any steps being taken by your country to develop community-based services as alternatives to institutional care.

22. DE-INSTITUTIONALISATION PROCESSES

If forms of residential care exist in your country, is the number of persons with disabilities living in institutional care decreasing due to the increased availability of quality services in the community supported and funded by the state?

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community)

- **Yes.** The number of persons with disabilities living in residential care is decreasing accordingly to official data.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** The number of persons with disabilities living in residential care is stable accordingly to official data.
- **No.** The number of persons with disabilities living in residential care is increasing accordingly to official data.
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT Please comment on your answer indicating what types of community support services the local authorities (or other stakeholders) are providing to persons with disability to facilitate their daily life.

23. PROTECTION AND MONITORING

Are facilities and programmes designed to serve persons with disabilities effectively monitored by independent authorities?

Article 16 of the UN CRPD requires the state to 'take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects. States Parties shall ensure that all facilities and programmes designed to serve persons with disabilities, including residential care settings, are effectively monitored by independent authorities in order to prevent the occurrence of all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 16 (Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse), No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community)

- **Yes.** All facilities and programmes, including residential care settings, are monitored annually by an independent body.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Not all facilities and programmes are monitored or not on a regular basis.
- **No.** Facilities and programmes, including residential care settings, are no monitored at all.
- **N/A /other.**

24. ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Do measures and safeguards exist to ensure the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing?

States Parties shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of the right to social protection, including measures to ensure access to appropriate and affordable services, to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes, to public housing programmes or retirement benefits and programmes.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community), No. 28 (Article 28 - Adequate standard of living and social protection)

- **Yes.** All persons with disabilities are legally entitled to receive all the financial support needed to support their living independently and being included in the community.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Such financial support, although mandated by law, is either not available to all, or is limited in extent.
- **No.** No person with disabilities is legally entitled to any such financial support.

25. AVAILABILITY OF PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Is personal assistance available in your country?

Personal Assistance is a tool which allows for Independent Living. Personal Assistance is purchased through earmarked cash allocations for disabled people, the purpose

of which is to pay for any assistance needed. Personal Assistance should be provided on the basis of an individual needs assessment and depending on the life situation of each individual. (Accordingly to ENIL's definition of Personal Assistance)

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community), No. 28 (Article 28 - Adequate standard of living and social protection)

- **Yes.** Personal assistance is available for all people with all disabilities and is sufficient (in terms of the number of hours provided to individuals) to ensure people with disabilities can live independently in the community.
 - **Yes, with qualifications.** Personal assistance is available only for certain types of disability or only for people with the highest support needs; it is provided for a limited number of hours; the government restricts the tasks that a personal assistant can; people with disabilities cannot chose or train their personal assistant; or only fund unemployed family members can act as the personal assistant.
 - **No.** Personal assistance is not available in your country.
 - **N/A /other.**
- COMMENT Please use the comment to indicate for example the percentage of people with disability having access to personal assistance, whether it is available across the country or only in certain cities or regions; for which impairment groups; if it is means-tested, and whether it is sufficiently funded.

26. AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY

Is there public funding available to ensure that people with disabilities have access to the necessary assistive devices and technologies?

Habilitation and rehabilitation focus on equipping the individual with the specific knowledge, tools, or resources that he or she requires based on his or her unique circumstances and disability, such as assistive technologies, specific training, education, or skills development. Assistive devices and technologies such as wheelchairs, crutches, prostheses, mobility aides, hearing aids, visual aids, and specialized computer software and hardware (referred to as the 'basic assistive devices') increase mobility, hearing, vision and communication capacities. With the aid of these technologies, people with disabilities are better able to live independently and participate in their societies. This question only takes in consideration the basic assistive devices and technologies, as listed above.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 19 (Living independently and being included in the community), No. 26 (Article 26 - Habilitation and rehabilitation)

- **Yes.** Basic assistive devices are available and funded by the government for all people with disabilities require them.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Basic assistive devices are partly available and/or the government funds them partly or only for specific types of disability.
- **No.** Assistive devices are not readily available for people with disabilities or are not funded by the government.
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT Please comment about the extent of availability; also for example indicating if there are other ways (other than through government support) in which people with disabilities can access basic assistive devices.

Focus on Political Participation

27. RIGHT TO VOTE

Do persons with disabilities have the right to vote by secret ballot in election?

This question is referring to every voter's inalienable right to vote secretly. The question refers to the electoral processes at all levels (local, national, etc).

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 29 (Participation in political and public life)

- **Yes.** Every voter with a disability has the right to vote by secret ballot.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Not every voter with a disability or a voter may not be able to vote secretly.
- **No.** Such right do not exists. Or, the right is meaningless since medical practitioners, election administration staff or others can effectively violate this right.
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT Please describe any significant differences between the legal situation and the reality of voting. Especially, please comment if your country has lifted all legal restrictions for persons with psychosocial or intellectual

disabilities. If the answer is "no" please comment whether the person with disability who has been deprived of his/ her legal capacity is able to access redress and complaint mechanisms.

28. RIGHT TO BE ELECTED

Do persons with disabilities have the right to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government?

This question refers to the legal capacity of all persons with disabilities to fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others.

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 29 (Participation in political and public life)

- **Yes.** Every person with a disability has the legal capacity to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** Not every person with a disability or not all public functions or not at all levels of government.
- **No such right exists.**
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT Please describe any significant differences between the legal situation and the reality. Especially, please comment if your country has lifted all legal restrictions of persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities to stand for elections or hold office and perform public functions, or if there are, for example, barriers that excludes persons with disabilities from performing certain roles or tasks within a particular public function.

29. REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS IN VOTING PROCEDURES

Are reasonable accommodations available to assist voters with disabilities in voting on their own and in secret in polling stations and public spaces?

Reasonable accommodations enable all persons with disabilities to vote in situations where it would otherwise not be possible for them to vote, taking into account the needs of all people with physical, visual, hearing impairments and people with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties. Relates to UN CRPD article No. 29 (Participation in political and public life)

- **Yes.** There is a legal duty to provide reasonable accommodations for every voter with a disability.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** There is a legal duty to provide reasonable accommodations only for persons with a specific type of disability, or only for some elections. Or only assistance has to be provided by electoral authorities and/or officials and not by a person of their own choice.
- **No.** there is not a legal duty to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities in polling stations and public spaces in voting procedures.
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT Please indicate which kind of reasonable accommodations people with disabilities are entitled to have in voting. Or if only assistance has to be provided (like, for example, allowing blind voters to have an assistant marking the ballot for them) etc.

30. ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION ON ELECTIONS

Is the official electorate information produced by the Election Management Body accessible to all?

This question ask if the official electorate information, produced by the Election Management Body, regarding information on elections, voter registration, modalities of voting and accessibility of voting procedures, ballots and facilities – is available in various forms (including sign language, accessible to screen-readers, audio, braille, electronic and easy-to-read and understand versions).

Relates to UN CRPD article No. 29 (Participation in political and public life)

- **Yes.** The official electorate information is both accessible and easy to understand for every voter with a disability.
- **Yes, with qualifications.** The official electorate information is only partially accessible and easy to understand, or is only available in some accessible formats or not all the information referring to the whole electoral system is accessible.
- **No.** The official electorate information is neither accessible nor easy to understand and use for every voter with a disability.
- **N/A /other.**

COMMENT Please describe any significant aspect regarding the situation in your country, particularly referring to the government's official website.

Social indicators: Analysis of questions

All answers of all respondents summarized

All answers by question		Yes	Yes with quali- fications	No	N/A	Aver age*
1. Newly constructed buildings	Built environnement	45%	35%	15%	4%	0,7
2. Time frame for existing buildings	Built environnement	19%	19%	59%	3%	0,3
3. Urban transport system	Transportation	3%	45%	49%	3%	0,3
4. Emergency early warning system	Emergency	6%	22%	64%	8%	0,2
5. Sign language recognition	Access to justice	34%	32%	27%	7%	0,5
6. Publicly available websites	Access to information	14%	30%	50%	6%	0,3
7. Inclusive primary education	Education	45%	45%	7%	3%	0,7
8. Alternative testing methods for students	Education	21%	40%	30%	10%	0,4
9. Data on university graduates	Data	6%	20%	64%	10%	0,2
10. Accommodation in the workplace	Employment	21%	36%	38%	5%	0,4
11. Data on state employment	Data	17%	33%	44%	6%	0,4
12. Increase in employment	Employment	17%	13%	52%	19%	0,3
13. Data on education and employment	Data	24%	32%	35%	9%	0,4
14. Umbrella organization existing and funded	Implementation and monitoring	36%	35%	23%	7%	0,6
15. CRPD focal points installed	Implementation and monitorig	22%	41%	26%	11%	0,5
16. UN CRPD accessible format	Implementation and monitorig	12%	25%	50%	13%	0,3
17. Supported decision-making alternatives	Equal recognition before the law	8%	43%	42%	7%	0,3
18. Safeguards	Equal recognition before the law	12%	46%	33%	9%	0,4 IL
19. Right to marriage and have children	Personal rights	52%	33%	6%	9%	0,7 IL
20. Data collection on institutions	Data	12%	31%	43%	14%	0,3
21. Alternatives to institutions and decision making	Community based-service and alternatives to institutions	15%	41%	25%	19%	0,4
22. De-institutionalisation processes	Community based-service and alternatives to institutions	16%	21%	26%	37%	0,4 IL
23. Protection and monitoring	Legal & social protection	13%	48%	26%	13%	0,4 IL
24. Adequate standard of living and social protection	Legal & social protection	13%	59%	21%	7%	0,5 IL
25. Availability of personal assistance services	Assistance and support	7%	43%	38%	11%	0,3 IL
26. Availability of assistive devices and technology	Assistance and support	20%	48%	22%	10%	0,5 IL
27. Right to vote	Political rights	50%	38%	3%	10%	0,8 PP
28. Right to be elected	Political rights	50%	35%	4%	12%	0,8 PP
29. Reasonable accomodations in voting procedures	Access to voting	33%	35%	20%	12%	0,6 PP
30. Accessibility of information on elections	Access to voting	18%	40%	28%	14%	0,4 PP

All answers by question and summarized by topic		Yes	Yes with quali- fications	No	N/A	Aver age*
Q1, Q2	Built environnement	32%	27%	37%	4%	0,5
Q3	Transportation	3%	45%	49%	3%	0,3
Q4	Emergency	3%	22%	64%	8%	0,2
Q5 and	Political participation: access to justice	34%	32%	27%	7%	0,5
Q6	Political participation: access to information	14%	30%	50%	6%	0,3
Q7, Q8	Education	33%	43%	18%	6%	0,6
Q9, Q11, Q13, Q20	Data	15%	29%	46%	10%	0,3
Q10, Q12	Employment	18%	24%	45%	12%	0,3
Q14, Q15, Q16	Implementation and monitorig	23%	34%	33%	10%	0,4
Q17, Q18	Independent living: equal recognition before the law	10%	44%	37%	8%	0,4 IL
Q19	Independent living: personal rights	52%	33%	6%	9%	0,7 IL
Q21, Q22	Independent living: community based-service and alternatives to institutions	15%	31%	25%	28%	0,4 IL
Q23, Q24	Independent living: legal & social protection	13%	53%	24%	10%	0,4 IL
Q25, Q26	Independent living: assistance and support	14%	45%	30%	11%	0,4 IL
Q27, Q28	Political participation: political rights	50%	36%	4%	11%	0,8 PP
Q29, Q30	Political participation: access to voting procedures	26%	38%	24%	13%	0,5 PP

Average calculated with: *Yes=1; Yes with Qualification=0,5; No=0 | Q=Question Number, N/A= not available
IL = related to Independent Living, PP = related to Political Participation

All answers to all questions

Expert from Country	Afghanistan	Algeria	Angola	Antigua and Barbuda	Argentina	Armenia	Australia	Austria	Azerbaijan	Bangladesh	Bangladesh	Barbados	Belarus	Belgium	Belgium	Belgium	Belgium	Belize	Benin	Bhutan	Bosnia Herzegovina	Bosnia Herzegovina	Brazil	Bulgaria	Burkina Faso	Burundi	Cambodia	Cameroon	Cameroon	Canada	Canada	China	Colombia	Colombia	Cook Islands	Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Djibouti	Dominica	Dominican Republic				
Region	Asia & Pacific	Northern Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Latin America & Caribbean	Asia & Pacific	Asia & Pacific	Oceania	Europe	Europe	Asia & Pacific	Asia & Pacific	Latin America & Caribbean	Europe	Europe	Europe	Europe	Europe	Latin America & Caribbean	Sub-Saharan Africa	Asia & Pacific	Europe	Europe	Latin America & Caribbean	Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Asia & Pacific	Sub-Saharan Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	North America	North America	Asia & Pacific	Latin America & Caribbean	Oceania	Latin America & Caribbean	Latin America & Caribbean	Latin America & Caribbean	Latin America & Caribbean	Asia & Pacific	Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	Latin America & Caribbean	Latin America & Caribbean				
1. Newly constructed buildings	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
2. Time frame for existing buildings	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
3. Urban transport system	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
5. Sign language recognition	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
6. Publicly available websites	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
7. Inclusive primary education	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
8. Alternative testing methods for students	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
9. Data on university graduates	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●		
10. Accommodation in the workplace	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●		
11. Data on state employment	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●		
12. Increase in employment	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	NA		
13. Data on education and employment	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●		
14. Umbrella organization existing and funded	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
15. CRPD focal points installed	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●		
16. UN CRPD accessible format	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●		
17. Supported decision-making alternatives	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	P.P.	
18. Safeguards	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	P.P.
19. Right to marriage and have children	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
20. Data collection on institutions	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	
21. Alternatives to institutions and decision-making	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	P.P.	
22. De-institutionalisation processes	NA	●	●	●	NA	NA	NA	●	NA	NA	NA	NA	●	NA	●	●	NA	NA	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	NA	NA	●	●	NA	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	P.P.	
23. Protection and monitoring	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	P.P.	
24. Adequate standard of living and social protection	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	P.P.	
25. Availability of personal assistance services	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	P.P.	
26. Availability of assistive devices and technology	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	P.P.	
27. Right to vote	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	I.L.	
28. Right to be elected	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	I.L.	
29. Reasonable accommodations in voting procedures	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	I.L.	
30. Accessibility of information on elections	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	●	●	●	●	NA	●	●	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	NA	●	NA	NA	●	●	●	●	●	I.L.	

● Yes ● Yes with Qualification ● No NA=Not available
IL = related to Independent Living, PP = related to Political Participation

All answers to all questions (continued)

[illegible][illegible]

All answers to all questions (continued)

[illegible]

● Yes ● Yes with Qualification ● No NA=Not available
IL = related to Independent Living, PP = related to Political Participation

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- European Network for Independent Living (ENIL),
- European Network for CSR and Disability (CSR+D)
- Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES),
- Human Rights Watch (HRW), Independent Living Institute (ILI),
- International Disability Alliance (IDA),
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- International Telecommunication Union (ITU),
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All 39 Innovative Practices 2015

Listed by country name

Title	Country	Organization
Regional network to promote legal capacity of people with psychosocial disabilities	Argentina	The Trust for the Americas /(OAS)
Voting independently and privately	Australia	Scytl Secure Electronic Voting, S.A.
Individual Supported Living	Australia	School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work, Curtin University
Competition among students for innovative devices and software	Austria	UNIKATE
"Proefwonen" – fast access to affordable homes	Belgium	Woonwinkel Zennevallei
Freedom School - Training for an active role in society	Belgium	Onafhankelijk Leven vzw
Stimulating political participation for persons with an intellectual disability	Belgium	Our New Future
Microboards: Small non-profits for supported decision-making	Canada	Vela Microboard Association
Living alone with individualized support	Croatia	Association for Promoting Inclusion (API)
Voting without legal capacity	Croatia	Udruga za samozastupanje (Association for Self Advocacy)
Study kit about citizenship and personal rights	Denmark	National Board of Social Services (Socialstyrelsen)
Diverting EU funds towards community-based care	EU	European Expert Group (EEG)
Providing accessible candidate lists and other election-related material for visually impaired persons	Finland	Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (FFVI)
Guidelines for accessible elections in Europe	France	Inclusion Europe
Persons with disabilities employing their assistants	Germany	VbA – Independent Living e.V.
The ‘employer model’ in personal assistance	Germany	Rhein Main Inklusiv
MOBILE, an all-round support program	Germany	MOBILE- Selbstbestimmtes Leben Behinderter e.V. for independent living
Offering individualised support and sharing lessons learned	Ireland	National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disabilities
Supportive Housing: Helping young adults to live independently	Israel	Israel Unlimited
Trieste: De-Institutionalisation and Community Living since 1980	Italy	Trieste Mental Health Department & WHOCC
A business approach to sustainable community living	Jamaica	Digicel Foundation Jamaica
Returning children to their families and an inclusive environment in Moldova	Moldova	Lumos: De-institutionalisation and developing inclusive education
Training to actively engage in civic rights	Nepal	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
Personal assistance is custom-designed	Norway	Uloba
Inclusion of children and youths with hearing impairments	Papua New Guinea	Callan Services for Disabled Persons
Empowerment through peer-to-peer support in Rwanda	Rwanda	National Organization of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (NOUSPR)
Online platform on community based services	Serbia	Youth with Disabilities Forum
Living Link: Creating careers from disabilities	South Africa	The Living Link
Cheap tool to make ballot papers accessible to the blind	South Africa	Universal Ballot Template
Sexual Abuse Victim Empowerment Programme	South Africa	Cape Mental Health
Free personal assistance proves cost-effective	Spain	ASPAYM
Connect to Control: Cheap equipment to make PCs accessible	United Kingdom	Connect to Control (Scope, Beaumont College)
A "Brokerage" for short family vacations	United Kingdom	Scope and Suffolk County Council
Helpline and platform on personalised care	United Kingdom	Disability Rights UK
User-led-organization teaching and inspiring others	United Kingdom	SPECTRUM Centre for Independent Living (CIL)
Women's Institute on Leadership and Disability (WILD)	USA	Mobility International USA (MIUSA)
Strengthening electoral systems to be inclusive and accessible	USA	International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)
Employment and inclusion of rural girls with hearing impairments	Yemen	Al Saeeda Association
Enfranchising People with Disabilities	Zimbabwe	Jairos Jiri Association

All 11 Innovative Policies 2015

Listed by country name

Title	Country	Brief Summary	Category
Peer counselling as an approved profession, 2008	Austria	The region of Upper Austria is first to acknowledge Peer Counselling as an official social profession. Since 2009 disability-specific qualification courses (psychosocial, physical, intellectual, etc.) have certified more than 70 professionals. In 2014, peer counsellors offered up to 1,320 hours of service per week.	Law (Independent Living); Regional Level
Flanders’ Personal Assistance Budget, 2000	Belgium	In the Flemish region of Belgium the person with disabilities (or their representatives) controls both the assistance and the personal assistance budget (PAB). As of 2012 there were 2,112 PAB users in Flanders. About 6,000 people are currently on a waiting list.	Decree (Independent Living); Regional Level
Enfranchising people under guardianship, 2013	Japan	Following a ruling from the Tokyo District Court, Japan's Parliament swiftly – in only 74 days after the ruling – revised the Election Law, leading to the enfranchisement of 136,000 persons under guardianship and restoring their right to vote.	Law (Political Participation); Country Level
Funding a national disability information centre, 1993	Luxembourg	Luxembourg's disability information centre, which is under the full control of its member organizations, receives the Ministry's financial support. In 2013, 2,271 persons asked for advice and 597 used the centre's legal information service.	Funding Agreement (Independent Living); Country Level
Improving access to electoral events, 2014	New Zealand	The strategy of New Zealand’s Electoral Commission reduces barriers that persons with disabilities may encounter when enrolling and voting at elections. The Commission offers a wide range of information and resources in accessible formats. Some 8,000 large brochures, 15,000 Plain English Guides, and 11,000 posters have been produced.	Strategy (Political Participation); Country Level
Ensuring equal access for Members of Parliament, 2006 & 2009	South Africa	South Africa has implemented two policies to ensure the inclusiveness of its Parliament and to support all Members and employees with disabilities. Currently, 3 Members of Parliament with disabilities and 10 employees receive support, as so MPs who have children with disabilities.	Policy (Political Participation); Country Level
Voting and participating in the electoral process, 2007 & 2011	Spain	Spain has introduced for the first time a voting procedure for blind electors as well as a policy to improve the implementation of participatory rights. In 2011, 21,434 buildings with polling stations were accessible; 8,726 provided free transport services; and 1,367 accessible voting kits were provided.	Decree (Political Participation); Country Level
The right to a personal assistance budget, 1993	Sweden	Sweden is one of the few countries that entitles persons with disabilities to a personal assistance budget, independent from state and local government budgets. In 2013 some 19,500 people received a personal assistance budget.	Law (Independent Living); Country Level
Personal Ombudsmen, 2000	Sweden	Personal Ombudsmen (POs) provide support in decision-making for persons with severe mental or psychosocial disabilities in 245 Swedish municipalities (84 percent). In 2014, 310 POs provided support to more than 6,000 individuals.	Policy (Independent Living); Country Level
Electoral quota for persons with disabilities, 1995 & 1997	Uganda	Uganda legislated that elected political bodies at all levels must reserve a minimum number of seats for representatives of persons with disabilities. The country has some 47,000 representatives with disabilities – 0.5% of the registered electorate – at the local and district level.	Law (Political Participation); Country Level
Funding for running for an elected office, 2012	United Kingdom	Government grants help meet the additional costs associated with running for election that candidates with disabilities can face. As of 2014 the Fund had supported 50 persons with disabilities to put themselves forward as a candidate.	Funding Agreement (Political Participation); Country Level

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Uloba puts the vision of Independent Living ideology into practice.

Vibeke Marøy MELSTRØM,
CEO and co-founder, Uloba (Norway)

It is only now with the rat-
ification of the CRPD and
through awareness and
training sessions often
organized by organizations
for people with disabilities ...
that the issue of accessibil-
ity has begun in a small way
to integrate into the discus-
sions on disability.

Géronime TOKPO, Fédération des As-
sociations de Personnes Handicapées
du Bénin (Benin)

The election bodies organized volunteer
groups to support people with disabilities
to get information about elections, the
procedures, the candidates, etc., and also
to monitor and make notes and reports
about the possible barriers... Then they
conducted an evaluation and provided rec-
ommendation for the next election.

Sunarman SUKAMATO, Director, CBR Development and
Training Centre, Solo City (Indonesia)

The Scytl - eVoting solution brings the privacy and security of voting to visually impaired voters.

Sam CAMPBELL, Operations Manager, Asia Pacific, Scytl (Australia)

Five years in an institution seemed like an eternity. Now I live with
my parents and sister, and I want to be here forever!

Dumitrița, age 14 (Moldova)

Uganda’s special system of
directly elected representatives
with disabilities is the reason
why parliamentarians with
disabilities are now also
elected via the mainstream
electoral system.

Ndeezi ALEX, Member of Parliament for
Persons with Disabilities – Central Region
(Uganda)

What I like most about my Microboard is the
support that it provides me to do fun things
I enjoy, like tubing on the lake in the summer,
going out to eat, attending parties, and explor-
ing new adventures together. I am really happy
to have people I know and trust helping me to
manage my life.

Bree-Anna, Microboard user, British Columbia (Canada)

For us, persons with intellectual disabilities, exercising the right to vote means that we are citizens, that we belong to our country, and that we can express our opinions on who runs the country and what they should do.

Corinne CLERMONT, Vice President, Nous Aussi (France)

My level of confidence has tripled since WILD.

Ekaete UMOH, WILD alumna (Nigeria)

The Personal Ombudsman does not act according to what he or she thinks is for his client's own good. The PO only carries out what the client tells him or her to do.

Maths JESPERSON, PO-Skåne (Sweden)

The SAVE program attempts to offer people with intellectual disabilities who are victims of sexual abuse the same access to justice as the general population and to ensure conviction of the perpetrators.

Carol BOSCH, Project Manager, Cape Mental Health (South Africa)

Only thanks to my personal assistance budget (PAB) am I able to keep on doing what I do now: going to work and being a father and a husband.

Peter, a PAB user (Belgium)

Join the Zero Project Network!

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