

# World report on disability

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## I. Background and Justification

**Magnitude:** An estimated 10% of the world's population - approximately 650 million people, of which 200 million are children - experience some form of disability. The most common disabilities are associated with chronic conditions such as cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases, cancer and diabetes; injuries, such as those due to road traffic crashes, falls, landmines and violence; mental illness; malnutrition; HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. The number of people with disabilities is growing as a result of factors such as population growth, ageing and medical advances that preserve and prolong life. These factors are creating considerable demands for health and rehabilitation services. Furthermore, the lives of people with disabilities are made more difficult by the way society interprets and reacts to disability which require environmental and attitudinal changes.

### Box 1: Key developments in disability legislation

- Adoption of action plans or policies on disabilities at international level such as UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities
- Emergence and evolution of Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR)
- Creation of organizations by people with disabilities and their families
- Paradigm shift from "medical model" to "social model" of disability
- Approval of new International Classification of Functioning Disability and Health (ICF): by the World Health Assembly
- Entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**Poverty and Health:** Disability is both a cause and a consequence of poverty. About 80% of the world's population of people with disabilities live in low-income countries and experience social and economic disadvantages and denial of rights. Poverty limits access to health and rehabilitation services. Health policies, programmes and practices impact on the rights of people with disabilities. Most of the developmental initiatives ignore the need of people with disabilities. The UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities emphasizes the importance of mainstreaming disability issues for sustainable development. Attention to health and its social determinants are essential to promote and protect the health of people with disabilities and for greater fulfilment of human rights.

**Need for strong and evidence based information:** Despite the magnitude of the issue, awareness of and scientific information on disability issues are lacking. There is no agreement on definitions and little internationally comparable information on the incidence, distribution and trends of disability or impairments. Despite the significant changes over the past two decades in the field of disability and rehabilitation (see box 1) there is no comprehensive evidence base. There is no global document that compiles and analyses the way countries have developed policies and the responses to address the needs of people with disabilities. Considering the aforementioned issues, the World Health Assembly Resolution 58.23 (May 2005), on "Disability, including prevention, management and rehabilitation", requests the WHO to produce a World report on disability based on the best available scientific evidence. This report will increase access to and promote the utilization of evidence-based research. The availability of this knowledge will play an important role in shaping policy and enhancing the lives of people with disabilities.

**Building on past successful experiences:** The production and dissemination of World reports by WHO and the World Bank have proven to be a most valuable exercise. For example the World report on road traffic injury prevention has generated a large number of follow-up activities including increased political support, augmented advocacy and media attention, enabled countries to develop national plans of action, generated resolutions by other organizations, been the catalyst for numerous prevention programmes (Government and Non governmental) and new legislation and ultimately contributed to saving and protecting human lives.

## II. Objectives of the Project

To provide governments and civil society with a comprehensive description of the importance of disability, rehabilitation and inclusion, an analysis of the responses provided and recommendations for action at national and international level based on the best available scientific evidence.

## III. Detailed project activities

The report will be developed between the beginning of 2007 and 2011 in three phases as outlined below. The focus will be on broad consultation and the inclusion of a large number of experts from around the world. The processes recognize the advisory role of organizations of persons with disabilities in decision-making on disability matters and ensures that organizations of persons with disabilities represent persons with disabilities at regional and global levels.

Phase	Action
Preparatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hold in house consultations with a wide range of stakeholders</li><li>• Establish an Editorial Committee to coordinate the development of the report and ensure the highest possible quality of its content</li><li>• Recruit lead authors and report contributors</li><li>• Advocate and fund-raise</li><li>• Create an Advisory Committee to lend political support to the launching and implementation of the Report</li></ul>
Drafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consult among technical and editorial contributors</li><li>• Draft each chapter</li><li>• Hold regional consultations with local experts to verify the proposed contents of the report, obtain "grey" data and get "buy in" from practitioners and policy-makers.</li><li>• Obtain information on disability and rehabilitation and good practice from "model" countries</li><li>• Carry out an extensive review process</li><li>• Finalize the text</li></ul>
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Edit stylistically</li><li>• Develop the graphic design and Layout</li><li>• Translate in official UN languages</li><li>• Print and disseminate</li><li>• Launch the report globally and nationally</li></ul>

## Partnerships

An underlying principal of this report is the building of partnerships for disability and rehabilitation efforts. The partners involved in this initiative bring in enormous technical and political weight ensuring the best quality of information and the widest possible dissemination. WHO and the World Bank will jointly produce the report in collaboration with a wide variety of institutions who are already involved in disability, rehabilitation and mainstreaming initiatives. A strong interdisciplinary and geographic orientation will thus be reflected in the report, drawing knowledge and experience from a diverse constituency of scholars and practitioners. These include; Disabled People's Organizations such as International Disability Alliance and its members, professional NGOs such as World Confederation of Physical Therapists, World Federation of Occupational Therapy, International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics, International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine, IPC; Non government organizations that belong to the International Disability and Development consortium and work in over 100 countries globally; International Paralympics committee, UN Agencies such as ILO, UNDESA, UNICEF, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, Ministries from various governments, etc. Additional partners will be explored.