

Project Update N° 2

Munich, March 16, 2007

Dear reader,

Including disability in poverty reduction strategies (PRS) may be one of the most effective ways for people with disabilities to actively participate in developmental programmes. For this reason, Handicap International, the Christoffel-Blindenmission (CBM) and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) have agreed on a cooperation on PRSP and Disability. These organisations are currently implementing activities in several countries based on the handbook "Making PRSP Inclusive" (available at: www.handicap-international.de/projekte/prs01.html) and on past experience in Tanzania, Bangladesh, Sierra Leone and Honduras. Project activities already started in Vietnam, Cambodia and Tanzania. In addition to the project activities other initiatives can be found worldwide. We are pleased to include in this second update on project activities also news from Togo, Bangladesh and Rwanda. Thanks a lot to all persons and organisations sharing their experience with us – especially to Natascha Hermann from Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) who contributed the paragraph on Rwanda.

The idea of this update is to briefly inform everyone involved in the project or interested in the subject "disability and PRSP". The Newsletter also intends to disseminate information about the project and encourage the knowledge sharing between different stakeholders involved in similar actions worldwide. The project updates are also available on the website of the GPDD working group on poverty reduction and disability (<http://www2.stakes.fi/sfa/disabilityandpoverty/index.htm>). Please feel free to forward this information to anyone who might be interested. Should you have any further questions or comments, please feel free to contact us (Ursula Miller: umiller@handicap-international.de).

Best regards,

Stefanie Ziegler and Ursula Miller
(International Project Coordination)

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Country Reports

Vietnam

Status of PRSP and disability: Vietnam developed its own PRSP in 2002 – the so-called CPRGS (Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy). The main aims of the CPRGS are now reflected in the national Socio-Economic Development Plan (Five-Year plan 2006-2010). Since disability issues were still not adequately included, a "National Action Plan to Support People with Disabilities (NAP)" with a comprehensive approach was recently published by the Vietnamese government.

Implementing organisations: GTZ Vietnam in cooperation with DED (German Development Service)

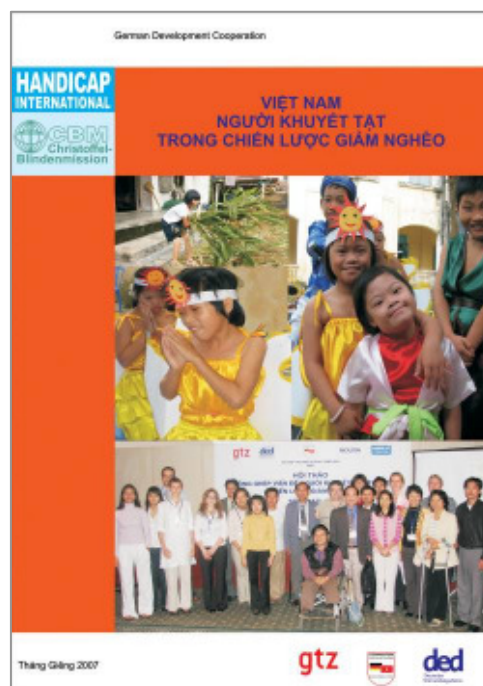
Contact: Ellen Kramer [ellen.kramer@gtz.de] and Pham Thuy [thuy.vietcot@netnam.vn] (project coordinator)

The PRSP and disability project in Vietnam is linked to and managed by the GTZ / MOLISA "Support for Poverty Reduction" project, which pilots suitable approaches in the field of local economic development, social protection and poverty monitoring in three provinces. A stakeholder analysis has been carried out in one of the pilot provinces of the GTZ supported project (Thanh Hoa) to identify potential local actors and partners for carrying out activities which are in line or even support the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for people with disabilities. Subsequently, on March 12 and 13, 2007 a planning workshop was organised in Thanh Hoa, where the identified actors at provincial level met with national key players (peer counselling) and received further information on the background of the PRSP and disability project. The participants of the workshop agreed on implementing activities in the following fields:

- Strengthening of local disability network
- Awareness raising
- Political lobbying
- Training of trainers in sign language

A coordinating group was established to organize and coordinate the implementation of the planned activities, which will be carried out by different stakeholders.

The handbook "Making PRSP Inclusive" has been adapted to the country's context, translated into Vietnamese language and will be published soon.

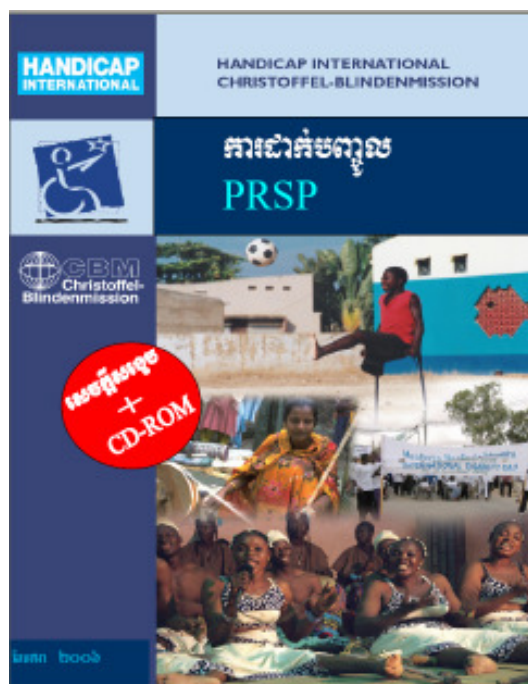


Cambodia

Status of PRSP and disability: The PRS process in Cambodia started in 2000. The "National Strategic Development Plan" (NSDP) is the second PRSP. At the moment, NSDP is in the implementation phase. There are very few disability-relevant sections in this document.

Implementing organisations: Handicap International is working together with a coordination committee called "NSDP Inclusive Committee" consisting of five DPOs: Cambodian Disabled People's Organisation (CDPO), National Centre of Disabled Persons (NCDP), Disability Action Council (DAC), Action on Disability and Development (ADD) and Association of the Blind in Cambodia (ABC). The project activities are funded by the German government via GTZ support Project for Mainstreaming Poverty Reduction.

Contact: Ratha Ken [prspcam-hi@everyday.com.kh] (project manager)



On January 18 and 19, 2007, a workshop on "Disability and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)" was organized by the NSDP Inclusive Committee. The workshop involved the key stakeholders of disability and / or PRSP, governmental partners as well as other NGOs. It was the intention of the workshop to provide information and knowledge on the PRS process in Cambodia. The situation of people with disabilities was also addressed and the relationship and importance of the most important stakeholders of this field was discussed. The workshop wanted to encourage the participants to discuss possible solutions and strategies to make the NSDP more disability sensitive.

The most promising opportunity was offered by the NGO Forum, which invited the DPOs to participate in the formulation of statements and recommendations for the Technical Working Groups (responsible for NSDP implementation, monitoring and evaluation) and the Consultative Group meeting. A detailed workshop report is available on request.

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As a next step, the NSDP Inclusive Committee will agree on a joint strategy and action plan based on an analysis around PRSP and disability elaborated by the project manager. Afterwards a call for micro grants will be organised, giving Cambodian DPOs and NGOs the opportunity to implement small-scale projects, which support the agreed strategy. Additionally the committee will formulate a joint statement/ recommendation to international donors and the ministries. Furthermore, the committee cooperates with the NGO Forum in order to voice the interest of people with disabilities.

The summary version of the handbook "Making PRSP Inclusive" has been translated into Khmer and shared with the workshop participants.

Tanzania

Status of PRSP and disability: Tanzania initiated the PRS process in 2000. The second PRSP was published in 2005 and is known under the Swahili abbreviation "MKUKUTA". DPOs were actively involved in the drafting process of MKUKUTA and disability is almost a cross-cutting issue, as it is included in seven sectors.

Implementing organisations: CBM and "MKUKUTA Disability Network (MDN)", funded by the German Government via GTZ project "Systems of Social Protection".

Contact: Judith van der Veen [coordinator@prsp-disability.com] (CBM) and Kaganzi Rutachwamagyo [rutakaga@yahoo.com] (network chairman)

The "MKUKUTA Disability Network" (MDN) was established after a workshop on the inclusion of disability into the Poverty Reduction Strategy of Tanzania in 2005 popularly known as MKUKUTA. The main aims of the network are to ensure that disability issues are included in the PRS of Tanzania and to enable people with disabilities to actively participate in and benefit from the PRS of Tanzania. Its vision is that an enhanced environment exists for the full inclusion of disabled people in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the MKUKUTA towards a better quality of their lives.

This year the network has started to become more active as funding has become available from the German government/GTZ through CBM. The main activity currently is focussed on setting up the network formally. A constitution is being drafted to lay out the functioning of the network. There will be an annual general meeting of the network on the 9th and 10th of May where members will adopt the constitution, elect the leadership and distribute responsibilities among members. With the constitution in place the network will be registered and hence have a status of a legal person. A secretariat can only be established after the registration of the organisation. As this is not yet the case, the network has now proposed to request one organisation to appoint one person as a temporary network coordinator in order to start working on the most important issues as soon as possible: His or her main task will be to organise the annual general meeting and conduct a baseline analysis about how the MKUKUTA implementation process integrates people with disabilities. This will be done by contacting key role players in the government, development partners, DPOs and Civil Society Organizations.

The executive committee members see a priority in re-establishing contacts with the Poverty Reduction office in respect of the inclusion of disability in the implementation and monitoring processes. The impression is that individual organisations have not been able to significantly lobby for articulation of disability in the MKUKUTA Monitoring Indicators Master Plan. Neither have they been able to form the disability specific Technical Working Group. Although disability is treated as cross cutting issues in the MKUKUTA document, it has been ignored in the general budget allocation. The other main activity of the network coordinator will be to draft a working plan for the rest of this year.

Bangladesh

Status of PRSP and disability: Bangladesh has started its PRS process in 2001 and published its full PRSP "Unlocking the Potential – National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction" in October 2005. Due to the active involvement of organisations working in the field of disability the issues is almost treated as a cross-cutting issue and a separate paragraph of two pages emphasize the importance of inclusion.

Implementing organisations: Handicap International with NFOWD (National Forum of Organisations working with the Disabled) and member organisations.

Contact: Rabeya Sultana [proj_coord.hibgd@dominox.com] (project coordinator)

In Bangladesh disability stakeholders were very active in the formulation phase of the PRSP in 2003 and 2004. The implementation phase started last year. Although several parts of the paper consider people with disabilities, the situation does not really change for them. On March 7, 2007 NFOWD and Handicap International invited DPOs and organisations working with and for people with disabilities to a half-day workshop. The objective of the workshop was to spread the information about the PRSP and to brainstorm on next steps for better inclusion of disability issues in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Togo

Status of PRSP and disability: Togo is in the formulation phase of PRSP. It has already produced a PRSP some years ago, but it had not been approved by the World Bank. The new draft of the PRSP did not include disability in the beginning, but Handicap International contacted UNDP and they gave FETAPH the possibility to make suggestions.

Implementing organisations: FETAPH (Fédération Togolaise des Associations de Personnes Handicapées), Handicap International and UNDP

Contact: Patrick Senia [psenia@hi-togo.org] (Programme Director)

Initially Handicap International contacted UNDP – a key player in Togo's PRSP formulation and asked to include disability issues. UNDP then suggested writing a document about the situation of people with disability in Togo which might be included in the PRSP. Handicap International proposed FETAPH for this task – as a national stakeholder has a bigger legitimacy to participate in such a process. So FETAPH wrote a paper and UNDP included one chapter on disability into their strategic document about the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) which will serve as basis for the PRSP document. Until now disability is treated in a separate chapter, but it is not yet a cross-cutting issue. To achieve this Handicap International and FETAPH do intensive lobbying and try to cooperate with other donor organisations (e.g. World Bank).

Rwanda

Status of PRSP and disability: Rwanda is currently drafting its second PRSP – the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) – with an aim of finalisation by June 2007. The first PRSP had no specific reference to disability or how to include people with disabilities in the process. People with disabilities were not aware of any benefits of this strategy, nor of any direct impact on their community.

Implementing organisation: VSO Rwanda (Voluntary Service Overseas), through funding from DfID, aims to support the Disabled People's organisations (DPOs) to participate more actively in the process and to insert disability firmly into the EDPRS, so ensuring their involvement and inclusion in the implementation of the strategy over the coming years.

Contact: Natascha Hermann [natascha.hermann@vsoint.org] (Disability Advocacy Officer)



In the PRSP formulation phase, 11 Sector Working Groups (SWG) have been formed, bringing together central and local government institutions, development partners, civil society and the private sector. An additional sector working group has been formed to cover crosscutting issues, namely Gender, Social Inclusion (people with disabilities, orphans, refugees, the elderly and other vulnerable groups), Environment and HIV/ AIDS.

For the first time members from the Rwandan National Decade Steering Committee, the Union of the Blind, the Union of the Deaf, the Association of Physically Disabled and the Parent's Association of Children with Mental Disabilities participated in the EDPRS process. In an advocacy workshop held in October 2006 they identified the Education, Health and Social Protection SWG to prioritise. They took part in the EDPRS training for the *logical framework* approach. This enabled them to contribute to drafting the Education, Health and Social Protection sector strategies and to review and comment on the other sector strategies, such as Justice, Decentralisation and Security. Due to the representation and lobbying of DPO members particularly the Social Protection and Education sector included a number of targets for people with disabilities (e.g. special need education, access to school, vocational training and the Social Fund). Members of DPOs got also involved in preparing the Social Inclusion checklist to ensure that issues of vulnerable groups (including people with disabilities) are recognised as national policy commitments and require actions by different sectors. A number of sectors have already taken these issues into account whilst others realised the need to include them more effectively.

Currently the SWGs are in the process of revising and scaling down their sector strategies. The national drafting team will then draft the final EDPRS document which is supposed to be presented to Cabinet for approval in May 2007. Despite the success so far to include disability in the EDPRS, it remains unclear if disability issues can 'compete' with other issues and will be embraced by the final document. More lobbying is needed to keep the needs of people with disabilities on the agenda.

News

Notes of the Workshop "Making PRSP Inclusive" now online available

The workshop "Making PRSP Inclusive" (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) was organized by CBM Germany, with the support of GTZ, as part of the EU-funded project "Breaking the Cycle of Poverty and Disability in Development Cooperation" in December 2006. This EU disability mainstreaming project is running from the beginning of 2006 to the end of 2007. The workshop notes are now available at:

<http://www2.stakes.fi/sfa/disabilityandpoverty/new.htm>

Recommended Publications

Trócaire has reviewed its cross-organisational Poverty Reduction Strategy project which was established in early 2002 and lasted until 2005. The experiences are summarised in a report and a briefing paper. Within this project Trócaire aims to strengthen Civil Society Organisations at country level and link these activities with international advocacy. The lessons learned are exemplary for other civil society organisations involved in PRSP, including disability organisations. More information is available at:

<http://trocaire.org/policyandadvocacy/prsp.php>