



6. SETTING UP A LOCAL DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

AN INSTRUMENT FOR IMPLEMENTING HUMAN RIGHTS

See p 81 the **CASE STUDY MACEDONIA/HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL: Developing local Disability Action Plans as an instrument for ensuring equal treatment and life free of discrimination at a local level in Macedonia**

A **local Disability Action Plan (DAP)** describes what has to be done to improve the living conditions and equalisation of opportunities for people with disabilities. A plan can, for example, cover a couple of years, and describe the measures that will be carried out each year. It is of course ideal if it can cover the period of the election mandate of the authority. Through such systematic planning, local DAPs will, step by step, push for the implementation of the human rights of people with disabilities. The following “characteristics” can be useful to have in mind when elaborating a local DAP.

6.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD LOCAL DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

- The plan shall be an **instrument for change**.
- The plan shall be an **instrument for implementation** of the human rights of people with disabilities.
- The plan shall respect and make reference to **the human rights aspect of the CRPD and the UN Standard Rules**.
- It shall be **drawn up in close co-operation** between relevant local stakeholders (including representatives from local authorities, service-providers from the public, private and non-profit sector, educational and employment structures and other relevant actors at local level, and representatives from local organisations of persons with disabilities or groups of persons with different disabilities).
- The situation of **women and children must be given special attention**. The reason for this being the risk of dual discrimination, both as persons with disabilities and as women or children.
- There must be **clearly written long-term objectives**. The objectives could, for example, be defined with reference to the opening sentences of the different UN Standard Rules or the description of the different articles in the CRPD.



- The objectives of the plan shall be achieved through **concrete measures**. These measures should be described in the plan:
 - ▣ **What** is to be done,
 - ▣ **When** each measure is to be carried out,
 - ▣ **Which** agency, institution or person or persons **are responsible** for the implementation, and who can be held accountable for the effectiveness of the rights,
 - ▣ **How** the measure is to be **financed**,
- There should always be a description of when and how the local disability action plan shall be **monitored and revised**.

6.2 METHODS FOR DRAWING UP A LOCAL DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

THE IMPORTANCE OF A LOCAL DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

When working to elaborate a local DAP it can be of importance to have some good arguments for *why* a plan is necessary and *how* it can be a good instrument for change. These arguments can include:

- The **human rights perspective** - all people have the same value and rights.
- A description of the actual situation for persons with disabilities living in the area in question, showing that **they face discrimination and exclusion and that change is possible** and necessary.
- The **obligation of States to respect human rights** as they are described in the UN Standard Rules and the UN conventions.
- That a local DAP can be a good way of making **systematic planning**.
- That systematic planning can be a good way of **removing obstacles** that prevent persons with disabilities from enjoying their human rights.
- A local DAP, being a promotion of inclusive development is positive for other excluded groups in the community since it pushes for the respect of **diversity, non-discrimination, poverty reduction and human rights values**.

THE ROLE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR ORGANISATIONS

A local DAP is drawn up to improve the inclusion of persons with disabilities in community life. It is obvious that persons with disabilities themselves are the best experts on what they need to achieve living conditions equal to other citizens. **Therefore persons with disabilities must be represented throughout the whole process when planning for and drawing up a local DAP.** This can be done through local organisations of persons with disabilities, or, if there are no such organisations, together with groups of persons with disabilities. It is also important that people from *all different groups* of persons with disabilities living in the area in question are represented. This is the best way to secure all relevant knowledge on what is needed to implement the human rights of persons with disabilities. In addition, a collaboration with other human rights groups or organisations, or organisations working for elderly persons, can enrich and strengthen the work on elaborating a local DAP.



Senegal
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THE SUMMARIZED PROCESS OF DRAWING UP A LOCAL DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Depending on the local preconditions in each community, the process when drawing up a local DAP can, of course, look different. The following steps though can be of help when planning how to work for improvements for persons with disabilities and the implementation of human rights:

1. Form of a working-group (with representatives from DPOs or groups of people with different disabilities, representatives of local authorities or councils, public and private service providers, womens organisations, human rights groups, local leaders, mainstream development organisations etc)
2. Disability training for the members of the working group
3. Make an assessment of the main obstacles to the participation of persons with disabilities today in relation to human rights
4. Make an inventory of the most important service and support needs for persons with disabilities, in relation to human rights
5. Analyse the results of the inventories to clarify where measures are needed and identify priority areas, together with DPOs
6. Present and discuss the importance of a local DAP with relevant decision-makers
7. Draw up a local DAP
8. Define the monitoring process to be set up, the evaluation methodology and actors.



IN MORE DETAILS...

The process of drawing up a plan can be started by different concerned stakeholders such as groups of persons with disabilities and / or their organisations, representatives from local governments and local authorities or service providers.

1. Form a working-group

Invite people with disabilities, their organisations and representatives from all relevant stakeholders to an open meeting:

- Discuss the actual situation for persons with disabilities in the geographic, political or other areas that the plan will relate to.
- Discuss what kind of basic service, support and accessibility needs of persons with disabilities living in the area have.
- Make a list of the most basic needs and the rights of persons with disabilities and make clear what their realisation means,
- Describe what a local DAP is and why it could be of importance.
- Discuss whether such a plan is needed.
- Form a working group and make sure there are persons with disabilities in the group.

2. Working group starts

It is very likely that the working group members will require training on certain topics in order to draw up the DAP correctly. Essential topics include:

- Understanding the CRPD and the UN Standard Rules which are at the origin of the rights-based approach to disability,
- Accessibility and universal design,
- How to define a local DAP
- Knowledge of other human rights instruments,
- Disability assessment,
- Budget and finance at local level.

It is important to check whether the Convention is ratified in the country or not. If not, it is not relevant to refer to the convention as anything more than as an international instrument that might have been signed by the government but still not mandatory within the national legislation.

Training programme for a working group responsible to define a Disability Action Plan (DAP)

BOX 9

This box offers the example of a training programme developed for working groups in charge of drawing up community DAPs in four municipalities in Macedonia. Full details of this HI-supported project can be found in chapter 8 Resources.

Module 1: Equalizing opportunities and tools against discrimination

- Human rights
- Equalizing opportunities for people with disabilities
- Discrimination and the tools to fight it
- The role of DPOs in the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation

Module 2: Mainstreaming disability into local policy

- Mainstreaming disability in local policy
- Community Disability Action Plans – characteristics and preconditions
- Elements of Advocacy
- Coalition-building
- Effective communication in coalitions

Module 3: Community disability assessment

- Structure of a community Disability Action Plan (DAP)
- Drawing up disability inventory lists
- Advocacy - Communication channels
- Basic presentation skills and how to run a meeting

Module 4: Drafting community Disability Action Plan (DAP)

- Drafting a DAP
- Techniques for establishing priorities

Module 5: Financial aspects of community Disability Action Plan

- Implementation of DAP
- Monitoring and evaluation of DAP



3. Make an assessment on the level of participation and realization of rights among persons with disabilities in the area

The next step for the working group could be to make an assessment of the situation for persons with disabilities living in the area in question. A set of questions has been drawn up in a questionnaire as a support for making such an assessment and is presented in chapter 7.

The questionnaire consists of questions about some of the more important articles for local development of the CRPD and rules in the UN Standard Rules. All these questions can of course be completed by more questions, based on different national and/or local preconditions.

One way of doing this inventory is to first concentrate on a few areas, for example the *Preconditions for equal participation* of the Standard Rules:

- Rule 1 Awareness raising
- Rule 2 Medical care
- Rule 3 Rehabilitation
- Rule 4 Support services

This can be completed with inventories of other fields of local importance – like accessibility to physical environments and to information and communication, education, employment and so on. When finished, the inventory will show to what extent the rights of the CRPD and the UN Standard Rules are implemented.

4. Make an inventory of existing services and support and their accessibility and quality

A second inventory can be done to clarify the need for improvements in existing services, support and whether they are accessible or not for persons with disabilities living in the area. If there are DPOs within the area in question, they should be involved. Otherwise groups of people with disabilities or individuals can be asked to participate.

This inventory can also be structured in relation to the CRPD and the UN Standard Rules, by going through relevant articles and rules, asking:

What exists in terms of services (for example – people with mobility impairment, people who are deaf or visually impaired etc) within Article 25 (Health), Article 24 (Education), or Article 19 (Are services available for people to live independently in the community)?

Are these services accessible?

Do persons with disabilities consider them to be of sufficient quality? And so on.



Testing accessibility in Vietnam
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5. Compare the results of the two inventories

By analysing the results of the two inventories it will be possible to see where improvements are needed. When listing the measures that need to be carried out, it might be a good idea to make two lists:

1. A list of measures that are easy to carry out and that will not cost a lot of money, for immediate and visible action. Try to define quick-impact projects.
2. A list of measures that might need a long-term perspective for implementation and that might cost more money, for progressive implementation if necessary, and a step-by-step action plan.

6. Discuss the results with relevant decision-makers

The results of the working-group should be presented to all the relevant decision makers and stakeholders in the community. Since the local authorities ideally have been involved since the start of the process, or at least have been represented in the working group, understanding among the local council is facilitated.

At the meeting the working group can:

- argue for the importance of drawing up a local disability action plan,
- present the results of the two inventories and the lists of necessary measures,
- propose that a local DAP shall be drawn up based on the results of the inventories,
- discuss how the plan can be drawn up.

A likely argument for *not* drawing up a plan could be: “Sorry, but we have no money!” If so, the working-group can focus on list number one: the list of measures that are generally easy to carry out and that will not cost a lot of money. **The implementation of these kinds of measures will show the decision makers that their efforts have an impact on the situation for persons with disabilities in a reasonable time.** This will most likely encourage the working group as well as persons with disabilities living in the area.

The measures in list two can be used for more long-term planning, where the measures are spread over a certain number of years.

7. Draw up a local Disability Action Plan

Objectives of the plan

In the plan there can be two kinds of objectives:

- Long-term objectives, aiming at the fulfillment of human rights,
- Short-term objectives, aiming at what is to be done during a year.

It is better if the objectives are written in *concrete* terms. For example:

Short-term objective: coordination between town planners, the architect, builders and DPOs means that the new market building is accessible to all; sign language interpreters will be available as one of the services provided by the local authorities.



Long-term objective: local schools will provide equal opportunities for children with disabilities to receive education through training of teachers, provision of support teachers, physical accessibility, individual plans etc.; the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities will decrease by X% during a five year period.

Measures of the local Disability Action Plan

The plan can be defined over a given number of years and then describe concrete measures to be taken year by year for the achievement of a particular objective. It is important that the measures are described in *concrete* terms. This should include:

- *What* measures need to be taken,
- *When* they are to be taken,
- *Who* is responsible for implementing each measure (which stakeholder),
- *How* the measures are to be financed,
- *Indicators* that show that the measures have been adequately implemented.

Monitoring and revision of the local Disability Action Plan

The local Disability Action Plan will need to be revised. When, depends on for how many years the plan is written. Therefore it is wise to describe in the plan **when and how** the plan shall be revised.

The same goes for monitoring of the implementation of the plan. One way can be to let a small working group follow and report on the implementation to the local authorities. The working group should consist of both local authority representatives (duty bearers) and DPOs (rights holders) and the result made public and accessible to all the community.

The structure of a local Disability Action Plan

A local DAP can be structured in many different ways depending on the local need for change, the set of stakeholders and decision makers present, resources and other preconditions.

8. Define the monitoring process to be set up and evaluation methodology and actors who should be involved.

Formal adoption of the local Disability Action Plan

If a plan really is to be carried out, the different parties involved must agree on the content. This should take the form of a written agreement, signed by every responsible agency and / or stakeholders. It is especially important that the DAP is signed and adopted by the supreme decision-making body or assembly of the local authority. Then the DAP can apply to all the activities they are responsible for.

Example of implementation table in the DAP of Veles Municipality Macedonia

BOX 10

Objective	Action	Target date	Responsible	Indicator	Needed resources
Developing and implementing accessible communication tools that ensure people with a disability are given the opportunity to be informed	Production of material in alternative formats including audio and zoom printing	2008-2010	Veles Municipality	Number of beneficiaries using the information Number of requested information	Human and material resources ensured by Veles Municipality
	Opening of information office within municipalities for Persons with disabilities	January-May 2008	Veles Municipality	Number of beneficiaries requesting information The information office	Human/material resources ensured by Veles Municipality
	Making website of municipality accessible for people with disability	January – April 2008	Veles Municipality and Association Open the Windows	Accessible web site Number of visitors	Human/material resources ensured by Veles Municipality

