

## Justification: to support the inclusion of a disability perspective in Infrastructure, Transport and Urban Planning Sectors



Inaccessible infrastructure and transportation denies women, men and children with disabilities access to community services and facilities and hinders their equal participation<sup>1</sup>. This inaccessibility contributes to social exclusion, to lack of access to education, livelihood activities, and healthcare. However, tools have been developed in order to integrate disability mainstreaming in urban or rural planning, infrastructure and resource allocation (e.g. [Guidelines for Sustainable Urban Development](#)). Many guidelines are available which can assist planners in developing accessible infrastructure and transport. (see **Accessibility Guidelines and Checklists**). It is simply the case that till now, appropriate action has not been taken to include the perspectives of persons with disabilities in Infrastructure, Transport and Urban Planning sectors. Here we present justifications for including the perspectives of person with disabilities in these sectors, from statistical, legal, political, economic, legal standpoints:

<b>Statistical</b>	Persons with disabilities all over the world are confronted with limited access to services such as transport, water and sanitation facilities, accessible housing or infrastructure etc. About 80% of the estimated 600 million people with disabilities live in developing countries, thus facing enormous problems in daily life. It is also not only limited to the 600 people living with disabilities, but in fact many others such as older people, people with illnesses, pregnant women etc. face barriers for accessing infrastructure and transport. The <a href="#">Rio City Project</a> assumes for example that half of the population has barriers for accessing the standard designed facilities.
<b>Legal</b>	Article 9 of the <a href="#">UN Convention on the Right of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD)</a> calls on States Parties to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life. States Parties must take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the built urban and rural environment on a equal basis with others, including public transport. States Parties are called on to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility. This applies to, inter alia: Buildings roads, transportation and indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces.
<b>Political</b>	The <a href="#">EC Guidance Note on Disability and Development</a> recognizes inaccessible public transport as being a factor contributing to the marginalization and exclusion of persons with disabilities. The MDG targets for poverty reduction and increased access to basic

<sup>1</sup> EC Guidance note on disability and Development 2004.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/development/body/publications/docs/Disability\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/body/publications/docs/Disability_en.pdf)

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	<p>needs for all only implicitly consider people with disabilities. However, people with disabilities mostly belong to the poorest part of the population in developing countries. Thus, for reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs, development planning, resource provision and infrastructure schemes have to include people with disabilities.</p>
<b>Economic</b>	<p>Inaccessible public transport and public infrastructure contributes to the impoverishment of persons with disabilities and their families. Numerous individuals and organisations have found creative and cost- efficient methods to adapt or build accessible facilities and services and improve the accessibility of transport services for people with disabilities<sup>2</sup>. This not only benefits people with disabilities but many other people in a community or town facing similar barriers.</p> <p>Thus,as stated in the <a href="#">EC Guidance Note on Disability and Development</a>, removing obstacles for participating in social and economic life strengthens people with disabilities and enhances poverty reduction of the whole community.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, including persons with disabilities in a development project does not necessarily require that many extra resources. Surveys demonstrate for example that the cost impact to ensure that new buildings are accessible to persons with disabilities is 1.12% on average, ranging from 0.1% for public building to 3% for individual homes<sup>4</sup>.</p>

<sup>2</sup> Venter et al.: Practical solutions for transport access of urban residents with disabilities.[http://www.transport-links.org/transport\\_links/filearea/publications/1\\_834\\_PA4060-04.pdf](http://www.transport-links.org/transport_links/filearea/publications/1_834_PA4060-04.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> EC Guidance Note (op.cit.)

<sup>4</sup> EC/ECHO: Review of Core Cross-Cutting Issues and Key Objectives affecting Persons in Humanitarian Crises. 2005. p. 48