

Including Persons with Disabilities in Disaster Risk Reduction

Findings from a Research Study from Africa, Asia, and South/Central America

Study Snapshot



In 2021, a consortium of Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V. (ASB), Centre for Disability in Development (CDD), Christian Blind Mission (CBM), International Disability Alliance (IDA), and Malteser International (MI) commissioned a study on **disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction (DiDRR) policy and practice** across eight countries of **Africa, Asia, and South/Central America**.

The study describes **progress, gaps**, and identified **good practices** in line with the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030 and concludes with **recommendations** to support improved disability-inclusive DRR.

The study design, data collection, and analysis were based on the **10 key inclusion criteria** aligning closely with the Sendai Framework.

Timeframe of review period: 2015-2021

- **Data collection/analysis:** Oct. 2021-Feb. 2022
- **Stakeholders engaged:** 93 participants, including 27 persons with disabilities across governments, I/NGOs, UN agencies, persons with disabilities, and their representative organizations (OPDs)
- **300** country-specific and regional documents screened; **150** reviewed in-depth
- **39** interviews and **15** focus group discussions
- Carried out in **five languages:** English, French, Spanish, Indonesian, and Bangla

Figure 1. Key inclusion criteria for reviewing progress in disability-inclusive DRR



Key Findings



Understanding disaster risk

- Significant **increase in awareness** of the importance of disability inclusion
- **Lack of practical knowledge** and **capacities** on “How-to” implement disability-inclusive DRR
- **No unified registry** or **systematic data disaggregation** in national DRR information systems
- Disaggregated **data rarely used** to inform **risk assessment** and **planning**
- Lack of consideration of **intersectionality**
- **Initiatives led** mostly by **non-governmental organizations**
- Efforts largely **reactive** or **project-based**, resulting in poor sustainability



Strengthening disaster risk governance

- **Policy commitments** to disability inclusion introduced in all countries as part of DRR regulatory frameworks, strategies, and policies; though understanding of inclusion varies
- Persons with disabilities often viewed as “**vulnerable**” aid recipients, rather than **DRR stakeholders**
- Disability inclusion **insufficiently prioritized** and resourced as part of government, I/NGO, or donor agendas



Investing in DRR for resilience

- Increased provision of **accessible risk information and infrastructure**, though gaps remain
- **Limited** availability and allocation of **budgets**, especially from governments



Preparedness and resilient recovery

- **Emerging leadership** and varying levels of **involvement of OPDs**, depending upon:
 - Readiness and capacities of persons with disabilities to take on new roles as DRR actors
 - Socio-cultural context, barriers, availability of resources, and support of mainstream actors
- Positive examples of **inclusive partnerships** exist, though collaboration remains limited
- Governments and I/NGOs **lack sufficient knowledge** on how to engage with OPDs



This project is supported by the Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction network (DiDRRN) of which ASB, CBM, CDD, and MI are members

Key Recommendations

1 Accelerate collective action to reduce the disproportionate impact of disaster and climate risks on persons with disabilities considering the **diversity of disability** and **intersectionality**.

2 Develop mechanisms to **institutionalize commitments** to DiDRR through collaboration with governments.

3 Establish DiDRR as a **shared agenda** across stakeholders applying a **twin-track approach** to disability inclusion, to the extent possible.

4 **Allocate systematically resources** to build capacities, institutions, and mechanisms for mainstreaming disability inclusion in DRR.

5 **Strengthen capacities for systematic data disaggregation** by sex, age, and disability (SADDD) in DRR.

6 Improve **qualitative data analysis** for **understanding** the key **barriers** and **causes** of the disproportionate impact of disasters on persons with disabilities.

7 **Strengthen readiness** for cross-sectoral collaboration by investing in **multi-stakeholder partnerships** among governments, I/NGOs, UN agencies, OPDs, and civil society.

8 **Extend collaborations with trend-setting donors**, under which mainstream DRR stakeholders align.

Twin-track approach to disability inclusion in DRR:



Mainstreaming disability inclusion

- Removing barriers to participation
- Facilitating access to information and services



Disability-specific initiatives

- Capacity development
- Individualized support and services

Equal rights and opportunities for all persons with disabilities in DRR

