



SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme



Guidance Note to engage Persons with Disabilities in GEF SGP Projects, Nepal



Few Words

The diverse needs of people with disabilities (PWDs) present notable challenges in addressing their specific requirements. These needs must be approached on an individual basis. This brief guide for engaging PWDs has been developed based on insights and best practices from the project titled “*Promoting Disability Inclusive Land Conservation Practices*, implemented in Sindhupalchowk”. The project not only succeeded in involving PWDs in conservation efforts but also led the way in using a Jeewatu-based monkey repellent liquid, which proved effective in keeping monkeys away.

I would like to thank Ms Renuka Pun for preparing this simple guide in a concise form. Likewise, I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Mr Hari Timilsinna, Mr Govinda Sapkota and Ms Sumitra Magranti for successfully demonstrating PWDs led conservation initiatives in Sindhupalchowk and preparing this draft.

This simple guide will support to engage PWDs in GEF SGP projects in Nepal. It briefly described human rights based approach, types of disabilities, special policy provisions for PWDs and working approach in GEF SGP project. Hope this guide would also be helpful for other conservation projects and development practitioners.

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Introduction:

There are multiple terminologies and understating used to characterize persons with disabilities in different context. Some used terms are handicapped, disabled and differently abled. The Constitution of Nepal 2015 and Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2017 mentioned persons with disability (PWDs) should be used while addressing them. This supersede the term used as differently-abled in the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007.

“Persons with Disabilities” is defines as disability as any long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Nearly 1.3 billion people (16% of world's population) live with a disability, and the number is higher in developing nations, World Health Organization (WHO). UNCRPD ratified by 185 countries, promotes the full integration of persons with disabilities in societies. As a UN member state, Nepal has ratified the UNCRPD optional protocol in 2010 committed to global pledge of “Leaving No One Behind” ensuring inclusivity, equity and social justice aligning with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Developments. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development clearly states that disability cannot be a reason or criteria for lack of access to development program and the realization of human rights.

The data of Nepal Population and Housing Census 2021, says 2.2% of the Nepali Population have some form of disability. Among the male population, 2.5% and female population, 2.0% have some disability. The list of percentages that represent the prevalence of different types of are Physical (36.75%), Low vision (16.88%), Blind (5.37%), (Deaf 7.85%), Hard of Hearing (7.87%), Deaf and blind (1.56%), Speech impairment (6.36%), Psycho-social disability (4.2%), Intellectual disabilities (1.73%), Hemophilia (0.75%), Autism(0.75%), Multiple Disability (8.78%) and Not stated (1.07%). The literacy rate among persons with disability is only 50.15%.

Models of Disabilities: Keys Perspectives towards Disability

Charity/Traditional: The charity model is based on good faith and emphasized to provide support and assistance to persons with disabilities through acts of charity or goodwill. Persons with disabilities are often treated as objects of charity and pity. People in community assume PWDs always need help and pity. Helping and assisting them are pious work and considered as gateway to heaven with the blessing from god. However, charity model is outdated and old model of disability.

Medical: Medical model frames disability as diseases that need special treatment and should be cured. They always need support from special care unit, need assistance from doctors and treatment in daily basis. As such, they could be employed in specific areas only.

Social and Human Rights Based Approach: This approach is based on combination of both social and human right based approach.

Social Approach: Disability is socially constructed and considered as the experience of social oppression and environmental barriers. It is the result of interaction between people living with impairments and environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social

barriers. It is not an inherent flaw within individuals but rather a result of the barriers imposed by society. The social model advocates for removing these barriers and promoting accessibility, equal opportunities and social acceptance.

Human Rights based Approach: Based on the concepts of fundamental human rights, disability is a natural part of human diversity that must be respected and have the same rights as everyone else in the society. The human rights based approach includes a set of principles concerned with equality, fairness, living a life free from fear, harassment or discrimination.

The human rights based approach includes sets of principles and guidelines as approved by conventions and treaty that ensured the disability rights based on non-discrimination, equality provisions for disabled community and inclusive approach in various sectors including education, health, employment and access to service delivery.

Persons with disabilities are not "objects" to be helped by charity, get medical care, or receive social protection; rather, they are "subjects" with rights who may assert their rights, make decisions for their own life with free and informed consent, and active members of society.

Types of Disability

According to Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2017, disability is categorized and described in 10 types.

1. **Physical Disability:** Physical disability is the problem that arises in person's capacity to use and move their body as a result of issues with their nerves, muscles, composition and operation activities of their bones and joints. For examples: polio, absence of a body part, effect of leprosy, muscular dystrophy, problem with joints and spinal cord, problems related bones etc.
2. **Disability related to Vision:** A visual disability is a state in which an individual lacks knowledge about an object's, figure, shape, form, and color because of a visual impairment. There are two types of visual impairment :
 - a) **Blind:** Even after treatment, if a person who cannot see the fingers of hand by both eyes at a distance of 10 feet or cannot read the first line of Snellen chart (3/60), then that person is consider as a blind.
 - b) **Low Vision:** If any person who cannot distinguish fingers of a hand from a 20 feet distance even after treatments like medicine, surgery and use of glasses or cannot read the letters of the fourth line of Snellen chart, then that person has a low vision.
3. **Disability related to hearing:** The problems arising in an individual related to discrimination of composition of parts of hearing and voice, rise and fall of position and level of quality of voice is a disability related to hearing. There are two types
 - a) **Deaf:** If any individual who cannot speak incoherently and has to use sign language for communication and cannot even hear sound above 80 decibels is deaf.
 - b) **Hard of Hearing:** An individual who can hear only little, can hear little but cannot talk clearly, can only speak little, who needs to put hearing aid in the ear to listen, also who can hear sound between 65 and 80 decibels is a hard of hearing.

4. **Deaf-Blind:** An individual who is without both hearing and vision is a deaf-blind disabled.
5. **Disability related to voice and speech:** The difficulty produced in parts related to voice and speech, difficulty in rise and fall of voice to speak, unclear speech, repetition of words and letters is disability related to voice and speech.
6. **Mental Disability:** The inability to behave in accordance with age, situation and delay in intellectual learning due to problems to implement of intellectual activities using the brain, mental parts and awareness, orientation, alertness, memory, language, calculation is called mental disability.
7. **Intellectual Disability:** An individual having difficulty in carrying out activities relative to age or environment due to absence of intellectual development before age of 18 years is intellectual disability.
8. **Hemophilia Disability:** Hemophilia is a lifelong bleeding disorder that affects the blood's ability to clot. This condition is usually inherited.
9. **Autism:** The absence by birth of normal behavior according with a person's age, showing abnormal reaction, repeating one activity, not socialize with others or show extreme reaction is autism.
10. **Multiple Disabilities:** An individual has problem of two or more than two types of disabilities is called multiple disabilities.

Classification of disability based on the the seriousness or severity

1. **Complete/Profound Disability:** Complete disability is a state where there is difficulty in carrying out daily activities even with the continuous assistance of others. (Red Card)
2. **Sever Disability:** The condition that require continuous comprehensive assistance in everyday life to take part in social activities. (Blue Card)
3. **Moderate Disability:** The condition of being able to perform daily activities with minimum or without assistance from others upon availability of physical facilities, conducive physical environment and opportunities of training and education. (Yellow card)
4. **Mild Disability:** Mild disability is a situation where taking part in regular daily activities and social activities by self without any social and environmental obstacle. (White card)

Some specific policy provisions for Persons with Disabilities

At local level, each Municipality or Rural Municipality under the Department of Women, Children and Social Welfare will ensure the implementation of policies and provisions for PWDs by facilitating necessary support and services.

- Person with Disabilities are entitled to receive free up-to higher education and scholarship.
- Provision of free health care and medical treatment and all hospitals with more than 50 beds should allocated two beds for PWDs.
- 5% reservation seat in public service commission.

- Free vocational trainings and job opportunities.
- 50% discount in domestic air tickets, assisting customs clearance and assistance materials.
- Special discounts and seat reservation in public transportation.
- Provision of physical accessibility to public infrastructures.
- Special discount on the fees while land acquisition and registration
- Special sports activity and Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programs.
- Free legal support to access to justice.
- Provision of monthly social security allowance for individuals with profound and severe disabilities. Those with profound disabilities (red-card holder) receive NPR 3,900 while with severe (blue-card holder) receive NPR 2,128. Individuals with moderate disability (yellow-card holder) and mild disability (white-card holder) are exclusive from social security allowance but some local governments may provide support under their own polices.

Getting a Disability Card

- *Doctor's recommendation letter stating the category and condition of disability.*
- *Recommendation letter from ward office.*
- *Submit application for identity card at municipality or rural municipality office with*
- *Copy of citizenship, three passport sized photographs, one disability visible photo (if applicable), and recommendation from Doctor and ward office.*
- *Upon approval, ID according would be issued.*

Assistance required for Person with Disability:

- **Physical Access:** Buildings, public transport and public spaces should be physically accessible.
- **Digital Accessibility:** Websites and applications should carefully designed to be usable by people with various disabilities.
- **Medical Care and Mental Health Support:** Access to healthcare services that address the specific needs of disabled individuals and access to psychological services.
- **Inclusive Education and Specialized Resources:** School and educational institutions should provide inclusive environments and access to resources such as tutoring, assistive technologies and adaptive learning materials.
- **Employment opportunities and Career Development:** Inclusive hiring practices and provide reasonable accommodations in the workplace and access to training and mentorship programs.
- **Social Inclusion and Networks:** Inclusive participation in community activities and access to peer support groups and networks.
- **Financial Support:** Access to financial assistance programs to help covering living costs, medical expenses and accessible housing option.

Working with Persons with Disabilities in Community

While working with PWDs, it is equally important to perceive PWDs through the lens of Human Rights. They should be treated equally and their opinions should be reflected in the development

interventions. Likewise, working with PWDs requires sensitivity, understanding, commitment and patience. Some key steps are:

- 1. Identification:** PWDs may be found anywhere, even in unpredictable locations. This can be done through baseline data collection and attendance sheets with provision of **mentioning disabled person in the family if any**. For example, a person taking part in organic vegetables farming training may not be disabled, but there may be disabled people in his/her family.
- 2. Rapport building:** Once identified, rapport building is necessary. This can be done individually or in the presence of a family member. This will open up their feelings, their capacity and their willingness to participate in the initiatives.
- 3. Ensuring Registration:** Ensuring registration of PWDs in the concerned institution is a basic step. If not registered, support should be provided for the registration. Registration helps to identify their different forms of disabilities. Once registered, they can easily access the facilities available to them.
- 4. Raising awareness:** Two separate awareness-raising activities can be initiated. One for the PWDs, which includes their rights and access to services, whereas the second one is for the local communities on changing their mindset towards the PWDs. These awareness-generation campaigns are crucial to PWDs as they can open up and face the local community to avoid shame or stigma. On the other hand, these campaigns will also gradually change negative perceptions and foster a positive attitude of local communities towards the PWDs.

Communities that hide or stigmatize disability: Because of negative beliefs and superstitions, some communities may hide disability to avoid shame or stigma. Breaking these barriers is crucial to bring PWDs in the forefront.

- 5. Inclusive Development Interventions with PWDs:** As there are 10 different types of disabilities with 4 different severities, no single solution or intervention would work. Each case needs to be dealt with individually. First, ensure that PWDs want to participate in the capacity-building activities. Once ready, they can be engaged in different tailor-made activities.

Engaging PWDs in GEF Focal areas

Following the Leave No One Behind principle, PWDs can be engaged in various focal area activities. For example, PWDs are engaged in organic farming in Sindhupalchok and Kaski District. Many are engaged in compost making, mushroom farming. Others are engaged in plantation of Amriso for slope stabilisation.

If PWDs cannot be engaged in these areas, seed support can also be given to the households having PWDs. But make sure these facilities are received because of the PWDs.

Mushroom Farming is ideal livelihood option for us as it required low physical input and mobility. It can be managed *within a small indoor space and generate income in few weeks.*

- *Purna Tamang, Pragatishil Land Conservation Group, Indrawati RM-9*



6. Developing linkages: There are many development agencies, partners who are providing support to PWDs. Simply linking these institution, PWDs may get the services they needed.

Be aware!

Misusing the services and opportunities for disability: Be aware that there may be some individuals or communities who may misuse the services and opportunities provided to PWDs. Make sure that the budget and services are used for the betterment of PWDs.

7. Develop as a role model:

Once PWDs can overcome the social stigma, carry out different task and specialized in their field, they can serve as a role model for other PWDs. This may inspire and empower others creating a ripple effects that encourages more PWDs to break barriers and participate actively in the society.



Mr. Sukra Bahadur Tamang, PWD, Secretary, Pipleman Land Conservation Group, Indrawati RM-5, Sindhupalchwok, has served as role model and resource person in preparing Jeewatu based monkey repellent liquid. He had successfully tested the repellent to keep the monkey away in his farm.