

Recipients:

- 1. THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT**
- 2. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES**
- 3. DONOR ORGANIZATIONS**

The report focuses on the link between development and disability, focusing on the need to include the disability dimension in regional development policies. Inclusive development promoted by international bodies is a global priority.

The Republic of Moldova assumed an obligation to achieve this goal by joining Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and international treaties on human rights.

Report on analysis of regional development policy documents from the perspective of social inclusion of people with disabilities

2018



This Report was prepared by independent expert Ludmila Ciocan within the project "Support for the Sustainability Plan of the Alliance of Organizations for Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Moldova" funded by the Representative office of IM Swedish Development Partner.

For details:

**Alliance of Organizations
for Persons with Disabilities
in the Republic of Moldova**

Chisinau municipality, Serghei Lazo street, 4, MD-2012

Phone: +373 22 234261, +(373)79222505

aopdmoldova@gmail.com

www.incluziune.md

www.aopd.md

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms	3
Specialty Terms	3
Introduction	4
Chapter 1. Disability and sustainable development: the concept of inclusive development	5
Chapter 2. International commitments and national policies in the field of development and social inclusion of disabled persons	8
Chapter 3. Findings on regional development policies from the perspective of inclusive development	13
Chapter 4. Conclusions and recommendations on including the disability dimension in regional development policies	15
Appendices	
Appendix 1 Agenda 2030: Development and Disability	20
Appendix 2 Contraventions for violation of the rights of persons with disabilities	21

Acronyms

WSS - Water Supply and Sewerage
RDA - Regional Development Agency
RLR - Regional and Local Roads
EE - Energy Efficiency
NFRD - National Fund for Regional Development
BSI - Business Support Infrastructure
SWM - Solid Waste Management
NGO - Non-Governmental Organization
UN - United Nations Organization
ROP - Regional Operational Plan
RSP - Regional Sectoral Program
RDS - Regional Development Strategy
NSRD - National Strategy for Regional Development

Specialty Terms

In this report, the following terms and syntaxes are used, as defined in the Law of the Republic of Moldova no. 60 of 30.03.2012 on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities

disability - generic term for impairments, deficiencies, limitations of activity and participation restrictions that denote the negative aspects of the interaction between the individual (who has a health problem) and the contextual factors in which he or she finds (environmental and personal factors);

disabled person - person with physical, mental, intellectual or sensorial impairments (seeing, hearing), which, in interaction with various barriers/obstacles, may limit his/her full and effective participation in the life of society on an equal footing with others;

social inclusion - a set of multidimensional measures and actions in the areas of social protection, employment, housing, education, sport, health, information and communication, mobility, security, justice and culture and other areas for the integration of people with disabilities in society;

accessibility - a set of measures and works to adapt the physical environment, transport, as well as informational and communication environment, including information and communication technologies and systems, according to the needs of persons with disabilities, a crucial factor for exercising the rights and fulfilling the obligations of persons with disabilities in society;

universal design - designing of products, environment, programs and services in such a way that they can be used by all people as much as possible without the need for adaptation or special design. Universal design will not exclude assistive devices for certain groups of people with disabilities when needed;

Introduction

Context

The adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006 and publication of the first Global Disability Report in 2011 by the World Health Organization in partnership with the World Bank greatly increased the interest of the international community on the situation of persons with disabilities in development processes. These events, followed by active involvement and advocacy of organizations of people with disabilities at international level, led to the integration of the disability dimension and the rights of people with disabilities into the global development processes.

Over the last decade, the UN General Assembly reiterated its commitment to include the disability perspective in the global development agenda, urging states to take urgent actions for an inclusive, accessible and sustainable development process. Thus, the new Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development includes for the first time more development objectives for people with disabilities and for accessible environments for them.

Addressing the challenges faced by people with disabilities in development processes, also known as "inclusive development", is needed to meet the promise of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to "leave no one behind."

The goal of the report

This report aims to analyze the main policy documents in the field of regional development from the perspective of including the "disability" dimension in strategic planning at regional level. This analysis is important in order to develop practical recommendations for the development of an inclusive society and an environment accessible to all in order to achieve sustainable development objectives.

Specific objectives of the report are:

- Introducing the concept of inclusive development and the correlation between development and disability
- Analysis of the main national policies in the field of development and disability and of the regional development policies from the perspective of inclusion of people with disabilities
- Develop recommendations on including the disability dimension in regional development policies

The report was developed following an analysis of the Regional Development Strategies for the period 2016-2020, the Regional Operational Plans 2017-2020, the Sectoral Regional Programs and the Annual Action Plans for implementation of the regional development priorities presented by the RDA in the North, Center and South Regions .

Analysis of documents was carried out from the perspective of the following questions:

- Is the "disability" dimension included in policy papers targeting regional development?
- Are the areas of intervention of the regional development policies harmonized with those of the social inclusion of people with disabilities?
- Do the action plans for implementation of regional development policies contain indicators for measuring the impact of measures taken on people with disabilities?
- Are people with disabilities and organizations representing them involved in the processes of elaborating, consulting and monitoring the implementation of projects and measures aimed at regional development?

Chapter 1 Disability and sustainable development: the concept of inclusive development

1.1 The situation of people with disabilities at global and national level

According to the World Health Organization, disability is part of the human condition. Almost anyone will have a temporary disability at some point in their lives, and those who reach old age will experience more and more difficulties. Most large families have a disabled member, and many people without disabilities assume responsibility to support and care for their relatives and friends with disabilities. Each epoch faced the moral and political question of how best to include and support people with disabilities. This issue will become more and more acute as the demographics of societies are changing and more and more people reach an advanced age.¹

The first World Disability Report, made in 2011 by the World Health Organization in partnership with the World Bank, estimates that more than **one billion people in the world live with a form of disability**, of which **nearly 200 million face severe difficulties in functioning**. In the years to come, disability will be an even greater concern because its prevalence is rising. This is due to the aging population and higher risk of disability among the elderly, as well as to the global increase of chronic health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and mental illness.

Thus, using scientific evidence and data available, the World Health Organization estimates that about **15% of the world's population has a form of disability**.

The problems faced by people with disabilities are transversal and complex. People with disabilities are often marginalized and discriminated throughout the world, excluded from the social, economic and political processes in their societies. The phenomenon of marginalization persists at the level of policies, practices and stereotypes that continue to promote the exclusion of people with disabilities. The cause of this marginalization is often reduced to a common root: barriers (attitudinal, ecological and institutional). **Barriers exclude people with disabilities in all sectors of society by limiting their ability to benefit from and participate in development at local, regional, national and global level.**

In the Republic of Moldova, according to the National Statistics Bureau's report in 2017, **the number of people with disabilities is about 182,000, including 11.7 thousand children aged 0-17 years**. People with disabilities represent 5.1% of the country's total population, and children with disabilities make up 1.7% of the total number of children in the Republic of Moldova.

On average, for 10 thousand inhabitants there are 512 disabled persons and for 10 thousand children aged 0-17 there are 172 children with disabilities. Almost every seventh person with disabilities falls into the category of severely disabled. 62% of people with disabilities are from rural areas.

Of the total number of persons with disabilities registered at the social insurance institutions most people are of 55-64 years of age (41.2%) and 30-54 years of age (38.4%). Regarding the cause that determined the disability, 96% of the cases revealed that the disability was due to a common illness and almost 2%

¹ http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/44575/9789730135978_rum.pdf?sequence=20

due to occupational disease and work accidents. According to the degree of disability, 18.9% are people with severe disabilities (1st degree), 50.9% with disabilities (2nd degree) and 30.2% with medium disabilities (3rd degree).²

It should be noted that this data refers to people with certified disabilities, but we must keep in mind that not all people, especially the elderly, who have limitations and difficulties in functioning, have a certificate of disability. So, in the Republic of Moldova, the number of people experiencing a disability may be much higher.

The sociological study "Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities - 2017", conducted at national level, reveals that most people with disabilities are very little or not involved in community life. Thus, over 70% of those surveyed indicated that they had a partially active or no active life in their communities. The low level of participation of people with disabilities in public life is due to the following factors: reduced physical accessibility to public buildings, low level of information about different activities and low access to information sources, discriminatory attitude of community members towards disabled people, barriers of a legal nature on the exercise of capacity (lack of legal capacity of many persons), personal barriers (psychological and relational) of persons with disabilities.³

According to the Study, most people with disabilities are not satisfied with their standard of living, and more than half of people with disabilities have mentioned that their lives have become worse / far worse than in 2010. Share of people not satisfied with the standard of living is higher in large cities, municipalities and increases with aging of people with disabilities. More than 90% of people with disabilities have mentioned social benefits as their primary source of income. The share of people with disabilities (64%) who indicated that their incomes did not reach the strict minimum is twice as high as in the general population (31%). More than 80% of respondents indicated that their income does not cover at all or does little to cover primary needs (food, clothing / footwear) and rehabilitation services.

1.2 The concept of inclusive development

For a very long time, disability was considered an individual problem of the person who was treated in a charitable and medical way. People with disabilities have been perceived as people who cannot care for themselves and need the empathy and support of those around them, or as people who need as much recovery as possible to "reach the normality" and participate in society. Subsequently, people with disabilities were approached from the point of view of the social model, according to which disability is the result of poor organization of society, which is why persons with disabilities face prejudices that prevent their participation in society on an equal basis with others. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities institutionalizes **a new approach to disability based on human rights**, to which persons with disabilities have the same basic rights and freedoms as persons without disabilities.⁴

² <http://www.statistica.md/newsview.php?l=ro&idc=168&id=5821>

³ <http://keystonemoldova.md/assets/documents/ro/publications/Studiu%20Incluziunea%20Sociala%20a%20Persoanelor%20cu%20Dizabilitati%202017.pdf>

⁴ http://antidiscriminare.egalitate.md/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/suport_de_curs_Formare-drepturile-persoanelor-cu-dizabilitati.pdf

In the last decade, the international development community is increasingly guided by the human rights-based disability approach; this being an inclusive approach, involving the participation of all population groups, but especially of disadvantaged people in development processes.

The concept of "**inclusive development**" is a relatively new one, being used for the first time in the literature in 1998, but has become an integral part of this literature since 2008.⁵

As regards the **inclusion of the disability dimension in development programs**, Handicap International attributes inclusive development several defining features⁶, such as:

- Inclusive development means ensuring that all phases of the development cycle (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) include the **disability dimension** and that **people with disabilities participate** significantly and effectively in development processes and policies.
- Inclusive development is based on the three key principles: **participation, non-discrimination and accessibility**.
- Inclusive development is based on a dual approach, which involves both (1) **actions for integration of disabilities in all programs (mainstreaming)**, and (2) **specific actions that directly target people with disabilities** to enable them to participate and benefit from programs on an equal footing with others.

One of the factors that prompted the inclusion of the disability dimension in global development policies and programs was the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. For example, after the adoption of the Convention, the UN Secretary General presented to the UN General Assembly at its 62nd session (27.07.2007) a Report on the Implementation of the Global Action Program on Disabled Persons: Development Goals of the millennium and synergy with other United Nations instruments for people with disabilities [A/62/157]. A chapter of the Report focused on the need to integrate disability issues into development efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.⁷

Let's specify that despite the recognized relationship between disability and poverty, disability was historically invisible in the international development agenda. For example, the 8 Millennium Development Goals, which served as the UN's "general project" for development from 2000 to 2015, did not include disability in the 21 targets or in the 60 operational milestones (World Disability Report, 2011, p. 12).

In September 2015, UN member states adopted Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which includes 17 sustainable development objectives and 169 objectives to guide international development efforts between 2016 and 2030. **Inclusion of disability in internationally agreed sustainable development goals is an important step in inclusive development** (see Annex 1 "Agenda 2030: Development and Disability").

⁵ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303311950_Inclusive_development

⁶ http://www.hiproweb.org/fileadmin/cdroms/Handicap_Developpement/www/en_page61.html

⁷ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/report-of-the-secretary-general-on-the-implementation-of-the-world-programme-of-action-concerning-disabled-persons-the-millennium-development-goals-and-synergies-with-other-united-nations-disability.html>

Thus, in **Agenda 2030** there are eleven references to disabilities or people with disabilities.

Three references are contained in the introductory text of the Declaration, in terms of human rights (paragraph 19), vulnerable groups (paragraph 23) and education (paragraph 25). Seven references are included in the Sustainable Development Objectives in the following areas: education (Objective 4), employment (objective 8), reduction of inequalities (objective 10), inclusive cities (Objective 11) and means of implementation (Objective 17). A last explicit reference is made to the monitoring and review of the Agenda in terms of disaggregation of data (paragraph 74g). Beyond explicit reference, persons with disabilities are included as members of "vulnerable" groups (paragraph 23), which are then mentioned eighteen times during the Agenda.⁸

In 2017, the World Economic Forum proposed the **Inclusive Development Index** (IDI) as an alternative to gross domestic product (GDP) for measuring the pace of development of a country. IDI adds to the specific GDP and social inclusion criteria of sustainability and equal opportunities for different generations. Thus IDI more closely reflects the criteria by which people assess the economic progress of their countries. In spite of economic growth, slow progress in terms of living standards and the multiplication of inequalities have contributed to political polarization and the erosion of social cohesion in many advanced and emerging economies. This has led to the need for a global consensus on **the need for a more inclusive and sustainable growth and development model** that promotes a high standard of living for all (see IDI Report 2018).⁹

Chapter 2. International Commitments and National Policies in the Field of Development and Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities

2.1 International commitments assumed by the Republic of Moldova for inclusive development

The ratification by the Republic of Moldova of **the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Law No 166 of 09.07.2010)** obliges the state to adopt a series of measures to promote, protect and secure the rights of persons with disabilities on an equal footing with other citizens in areas such as access to education, employment, transport, infrastructure and buildings for the general public, the right to vote, improving political participation, ensuring legal capacity, ensuring access to various community services, depending on the needs of the person, etc.

By ratifying the Convention the Republic of Moldova has undertaken the adjustment of national legislation and practices to the provisions of the Convention. **Accessibility is one of the key principles of the Convention** and is an essential prerequisite for effective exercise by persons with disabilities of various civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Article 9 of the Convention provides for States Parties to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to information, communications, facilities and services for the general public on equal terms with persons without disabilities in the physical environment. Thus,

⁸ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

⁹ http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Forum_IncGrwth_2018.pdf

measures are needed to identify and remove barriers/obstacles, as well as measures to include the principle of accessibility in all development projects so that inclusive policies exist at all administrative levels.

Article 32 of the Convention, which deals with international cooperation, stipulates that Member States will assume responsibility for taking appropriate measures for the implementation of the Convention, including ensuring accessibility and inclusiveness of international cooperation, implicitly of international development programs.

The Association Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union, ratified by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova by Law no. 112 of July 2, 2014, aims to contribute to the political and socio-economic development of the Republic of Moldova. This requires broader cooperation in a wide range of areas of common interest, including in areas of good governance, justice, freedom and security, trade integration and increased economic cooperation, employment policies and social policies, financial management, public administration and public service reform, civil society participation, institutional development, poverty reduction and sustainable development.¹⁰

The Association Agreement aims to accelerate deepening of political and economic relations, as well as the gradual integration of the Republic of Moldova into the Community market. Therefore, both the European Union and the Republic of Moldova have made a number of commitments, including joint efforts in the field of sustainable development.

Chapter 4 Employment, Social Policy and Equal Opportunities of the Association Agreement, and in particular Article 31 thereof, provides:

"The Parties shall strengthen their dialogue and cooperation on the promotion of the International Labor Organization's decent work agenda, employment policy, health and safety at work, social dialogue, social protection, social inclusion, equal opportunities for women and men, combating discrimination practices and social rights, thus contributing to promotion of better jobs, poverty reduction, strengthening social cohesion, sustainable development and improving the quality of life."

On 25 September 2015, at the Sustainable Development Summit, 193 UN member states, including the Republic of Moldova, adopted **Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development**. Agenda 2030 was developed on the basis of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which expired by the end of 2015. The issue addressed by the new Agenda 2030 is primarily aimed at eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development but goes beyond MDG activities and issues such as eradication of poverty, education, health, etc. new themes have been incorporated, such as peaceful and inclusive societies, the fight against inequality and injustice.

Agenda 2030 has universal applicability for all states, regardless of their level of development and priorities. The next step after being adopted globally, the Agenda needs to be tailored to the country's specific priorities and context (nationalized) to make it consistent, feasible and effective.

In the Republic of Moldova, the first stage of nationalization of Agenda 2030 took place between July 2016 and February 2017 by:

¹⁰ <http://infoeuropa.md/acordul-de-asociere-ue-rm/>

- (i) identifying the relevance of sustainable development goals and objectives and analyzing the correlation between Agenda 2030 and national policy priorities;
- (ii) adaptation (formulation) of Agenda 2030 objectives and objectives in line with national needs and priorities, and identification of policy documents in which they are to be integrated;
- (iii) defining the ecosystem of data needed to monitor and assess the level of implementation of sustainable development objectives.¹¹

Further, the Sustainable Development Objectives and their nationally tailored objectives are to be integrated into the strategic planning documents in order to be implemented, monitored and evaluated.

By signing Agenda 2030, the Republic of Moldova has undertaken to achieve objectives, focusing on three main areas of sustainable development: **economy, society and environment**, pointing out **ensuring human rights, eliminating inequalities** and **ensuring non-discrimination in all areas of intervention**. Thus, by implementing Agenda 2030, the Republic of Moldova is committed to ensuring equal access for all to the benefits of development. Agenda 2030 clearly states that disability can not be a reason or a criterion for lack of access to development programs and achievement of human rights, as long as the objectives of sustainable development expressly include people with disabilities.

2.2 National development and disability policies

The main policy document, which reflects the strategic vision of Moldova's development, is the National Development Strategy.

The National Development Strategy "Moldova 2020": 8 solutions for economic growth and poverty reduction (Law 166 of July 11, 2012, with subsequent amendments in 2014), is focused on the following development priorities:

- 1) Linking educational system to the requirements of the labor market, in order to increase the productivity of labor force and increase the employment rate in the economy;
- 2) Increase public investment in national and local road infrastructure in order to reduce transport costs and increase access speed;
- 3) Reduce financing costs by increasing competition in the financial sector and developing risk management tools;
- 4) Improve the business climate, promote competition policy, optimize the regulatory framework and apply information technologies to public services for business and citizens;
- 5) Reduce energy consumption by increasing energy efficiency and using renewable energy sources;
- 6) Ensure the financial sustainability of the pension system to guarantee an appropriate rate of replacement of salaries;
- 7) Increase the quality and efficiency of the act of justice and fight corruption in order to ensure fair access to public goods for all citizens.
- 8) Increase competitiveness of agri-food products and sustainable rural development.

¹¹ <https://cancelaria.gov.md/ro/content/guvernul-republicii-moldova-demarat-procesul-de-adaptare-agendei-de-dezvoltare-durabila-2030>

It is important to note that at the present stage a new **National Development Strategy "Moldova 2030"**, which presupposes the implementation of the Sustainable Development Objectives, is under preparation. We note that the new Strategy focuses on quality of life, human rights and inclusion in the context of development, through the development of the philosophy of development in 10 strategic priorities, including by ensuring equal opportunities for all people, regardless of the different criteria that make them different. Thus, according to the Concept of the new Strategy, the proposed priorities for development by 2030 are:

- Priority 1. Income growth from sustainable sources
- Priority 2. Ensure decent living conditions for all
- Priority 3. Improve working conditions and reduce informal employment
- Priority 4. Better balance between work and family
- Priority 5. Equal opportunities for relevant and lifelong quality education
- Priority 6. Ensure conditions for an active and healthy life
- Priority 7. Strengthen a cohesive and inclusive society
- Priority 8. A higher level of personal and community security
- Priority 9. More effective, responsible, transparent and inclusive governance
- Priority 10. Ensure the fundamental right to a healthy and safe environment

The National Regional Development Strategy for 2016-2020 (SNDR), approved by Law no. 230 of 13.10.2016, is the main regional development planning document in the Republic of Moldova, which reflects the national strategic framework in the field and introduces the national mechanisms of such development. According to the NDSR, the overall goal pursued by regional development policies is to *ensure balanced development in the national territory from economic, social, cultural, environmental perspective and avoidance of disparities and development imbalances.*

Thus, the SNDR aims at the balanced and sustainable development ensured in all development regions of the Republic of Moldova, which is proposed to be achieved through 3 strategic objectives:

- 1) ensure access to quality public services and utilities;
- 2) ensure sustainable economic growth in the regions;
- 3) improve governance in the area of regional development.

The main measures to be taken to achieve these objectives are:

Measure 1.1. Development of infrastructure of regional and local importance

Measure 1.2. Developing the principles of regionalization of public services in the fields of solid waste management and water supply and sanitation

Measure 2.1. Conceptualization of the network of urban centers

Measure 2.2. Strengthening and developing the regional economy

Measure 2.3. Strengthening and developing tourism infrastructure in development regions

Measure 3.1. Improve the legislative and normative framework in the field of regional and related development

Measure 3.2 Consolidate the institutional framework and administrative potential

Measure 3.3. Efficiency of the monitoring and evaluation system for SNDR implementation.

As a result of the SNDR implementation, the following results are expected:

- a) improved living standards of the population in regions;
- b) diminished regional disparities;
- c) insured territorial cohesion;
- d) reduced migration process in regions.

Taking into account the strategic objectives of the SNDR, each development region has endorsed its own Regional Development Strategy, focusing on **priority areas of intervention such as water supply and sanitation, energy efficiency of public buildings, solid waste management, regional road infrastructure, and local infrastructure, tourism infrastructure, business infrastructure, etc.**

In addition to Regional Development Strategies, the Regional Development Councils have approved **Sectoral Regional Programs (SRP)**, which are operational tools for regional investment planning for long-term development of the infrastructure of these intervention areas.

In the field of social inclusion, the Republic of Moldova transposed the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at national level by adopting Law no. 60 of 30.03.2012 on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities. The law introduces new concepts such as "reasonable accommodation", "universal design", "accessibility" (see Article 2) and regulates state accessibility policy (Articles 17-26) and ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities in various areas of life, and in particular: vocational education and professional training (Article 27-32), integration into the workplace (Articles 33-40), health and rehabilitation (Article 41-45) and social protection (Art. 46-53). Both public institutions and private institutions have to take a number of measures to implement these provisions.

According to the provisions of Law no. 60 of 30.03.2012 on the social inclusion of people with disabilities in the design and construction process, construction companies must ensure accessibility for people with different types of disabilities. Transport units have to adapt their vehicles so that they can also be used by people with disabilities. State and private companies are required to reserve and mark at least 4% of parking places for vehicles driven by disabled people by applying international signs. All public and private institutions must provide accessible infrastructure for people with disabilities, including in sectors such as culture, tourism, sports, entertainment, housing, etc.

The Moldovan Code of Conduct, following the adoption of Law no. 60, was supplemented by a series of provisions on sanctions for natural and legal persons in case of violation of the rights of persons with disabilities in areas such as: work, education, access to goods and services, construction, transport, roads, communication (see Appendix 2 Contraventions for violation of the rights of persons with disabilities).

In 2016 the Government of the Republic of Moldova approved **a Set of indicators for monitoring implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (Government Decision No. 1033 of 08.09.2016). The indicators aim to assess the progress of Convention implementation, contribute to strengthening the monitoring and reporting process, and to serve as a benchmark for further policy development, to assess the impact of these policies, and to identify and address barriers people with disabilities are facing in the exercise of their rights in different areas of life.

An intersectoral approach to social inclusion and ensuring respect for the fundamental rights of people with disabilities as well as other citizens is reflected in **the National Program for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for 2017-2022** (Government Decision No. 723 of 08.09.2017). The program involves 9 directions of intervention and achievement of the following objectives:

- 1) improve access of persons with disabilities to social protection measures in the community;
- 2) ensure the right to quality education of children and young people with different types of disabilities in educational institutions, on an equal basis with others;
- 3) increase access of persons with disabilities to quality medical care, rehabilitation and rehabilitation services;

- 4) increase employment rate of people with disabilities;
- 5) increase participation of people with disabilities in political, public and cultural life;
- 6) ensure accessibility to infrastructure, transport, information and communication for people with disabilities;
- 7) ensure support of persons with disabilities in exercising their legal capacity and guaranteeing access to justice;
- 8) strengthen institutional capacity to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- 9) increase the awareness of the population about the rights and abilities of people with disabilities.

Thus, we conclude that social inclusion addresses virtually all areas of development, and at both national and international level measures are needed to include the dimension of disability in development policies to ensure inclusive development.

Chapter 3. Findings on regional development policies from the perspective of inclusive development

For purpose of implementation of this Report, the following regional development documents, offered by RDA from North, Central and South Regions: Regional Development Strategies for 2016-2020, Regional Operational Plans 2017-2020, Sectoral Regional Programs and annual actions plans related to the implementation of regional development priorities.

Documentary analysis reveals that regional development policies are aligned with national strategic development goals and sectoral strategies in priority areas for the region. However, we should note **the lack of synergy between development policies and social inclusion policies at both national and regional level**. Addressing disability and social inclusion is virtually absent in regional development interventions, which increases the risk of exclusion of people with disabilities from the development process.

The Regional Development Strategy, as the main policy document guiding the development of the region, including the situation of human capital and demographic trends at regional level, **does not contain data on people with disabilities in the region**.

Sectoral Regional Programs address some social issues, including gender issues in the reference sectors, as well as in the projects related to each area (roads, tourism, business infrastructure, etc.). In addressing social issues, **persons with disabilities were omitted** and data on the impact of Sectoral Regional Programs on this segment of the population was missing.

The only document addressing the disability dimension is the Sectoral Regional Program for the Development of Business Support Infrastructure in the South Development Region. The document stipulates "the participation of people with disabilities in the development and monitoring of the implementation of the program", as well as "encouraging job creation for people with disabilities in developed infrastructures". However, the result indicators for these measures do not reflect the monitoring of the situation of people with disabilities.

From the introductory part of the regional development policy documents, it can be noted that they have been developed in a participatory way, with the involvement of different actors, although **information on**

the participation and/or consultation of people with disabilities and/or the organizations representing them is missing.

Both policy documents and action plans of the RDA for implementation of regional development policies include the term "accessibility". From the context, we conclude that **accessibility is more understood in the sense of "connection" and "connectivity" than in the sense of "adapting the infrastructure to the needs of people with disabilities and removing barriers to facilitate their participation in society."**

The Regional Operational Plan (ROP) includes projects in the priority intervention areas allocated according to the objectives and measures of the Regional Development Strategy 2016-2020, being oriented towards achieving the strategic development objectives of the region. In order to measure the progress in achieving the strategic objectives, indicators are established for each ROP measure, as well as for each project. However, it should be noted that **ROP indicators do not reflect the impact of implemented projects on people with disabilities.** Thus, the extent to which people with disabilities will benefit from infrastructure development projects in the RLR, WSS, SWM, EE or BSI domains as well as people with disabilities cannot be appreciated. In particular, the extent to which the accessibility of physical and informational infrastructure or the accessibility of goods and services for people with disabilities in these projects cannot be assessed. It does not reflect elimination of barriers for people with disabilities and the dynamic monitoring of the access of this population to public services and utilities available to the general public.

At the same time, although in most cases ROP indicate the initial values of the progress monitoring indicators, **the objectives to be achieved annually to advance the implementation of regional development measures are missing in multiple cases.** Under these circumstances, it will be difficult to predict and analyze the degree of achievement of the proposed objectives as well as the impact of development initiatives on the region's population, including on people with disabilities.

In conclusion, we conclude that **the strategic planning documents in the field of regional development do not correspond at the time to demands and principles of inclusive development.** Under these circumstances, it will be difficult to implement the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development at national level in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Chapter 4. Conclusions and recommendations on including the disability dimension in regional development policies

4.1 Conclusions

Inclusive development, involving participation of all population groups, but especially disadvantaged people in the development process, is a global priority. The Republic of Moldova has committed itself to take the necessary measures to ensure inclusive development through adherence to Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and international human rights treaties.

People with disabilities are one of the most vulnerable social groups, often marginalized, discriminated against and excluded from development processes. Because disability affects the person's participation in different spheres of life, a holistic intersectoral approach is needed to ensure inclusion of people with disabilities in development processes at all levels.

The role of regional development policies is very important in achieving sustainable development goals and national development policy as they are multisectoral. Thus, integrating the disability dimension into regional development policies is a prerequisite for achieving the Agenda 2030 promise of "not leaving anyone behind".

Ensuring the accessibility of road and transport infrastructure, communications and technologies, built environment, and goods and services for people with disabilities is a prerequisite for inclusive development. This implies removal of barriers, reasonable accommodation and use of universal design in all areas of activity. Accessibility facilitates participation in society not only of people with disabilities but also of the entire population, so that all citizens can benefit from an accessible and inclusive environment.

Consultation and involvement of people with disabilities and organizations representing them is very important in the processes of development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of regional development policies. They can provide insight into accessibility in different areas and can contribute to inclusive development.

4.2. Recommendations

In order to include the disability dimension in regional development policies, we propose the following recommendations:

1. **Consultation and involvement of people with disabilities, organizations representing them** (NGOs operating in disability field), disability experts at:
 - Elaboration and updating strategic documents for regional development;
 - Planning of regional development activities within programs and projects;
 - Elaboration, implementation and evaluation of programs and projects in the priority areas of regional development;
 - Achieving training activities for key actors in the field of regional development;
 - Monitoring and evaluating the results of regional development policies; etc.

For this purpose, we consider it is appropriate to include at least one NGO that operates in the field of disability in the Regional Work Group.

2. **Collecting and analyzing data on people with disabilities** at the stages of conception, implementation, updating, monitoring and evaluation of regional development policies in situations such as:
 - updating socio-economic profile of the region;
 - analyzing the situation in elaboration or updating of SDR, SRP, project concepts;
 - development of studies in various fields related to development;
 - monitoring regional development indicators and in particular the impact of implemented programs and projects on people with disabilities;
 - monitoring access of people with disabilities to infrastructure, information and communications, goods and services developed within programs, regional development projects; etc.

3. **Improving accessibility for people with disabilities** by:

- Carrying out the accessibility audit, construction and transport infrastructure for people with disabilities; information, technologies, etc. in analysis of the situation when developing regional development policy documents;
- Approaching and inventory of barriers for people with disabilities in different fields for the purpose of reasonable accommodation and removal of barriers of different nature;
- Inclusion of accessibility requirements for people with disabilities in public procurement, project proposals, reception of works, etc. in the framework of regional development projects;
- Promoting the universal design in the implementation of regional development projects;
- Monitoring accessibility of infrastructure, information and communication, goods and services in regional development projects;
- Empowerment of the parties interested in accessibility for people with disabilities; etc.

Analyzing the areas of intervention and types of actions planned by the RDA in the North, Center and South regions for the current year and the ROP, we propose **examples of actions through inclusive development** that can serve as a benchmark for the RDA to plan actions for successive years.

Examples of actions proposed in the field of updating regional development documents:

- Updating socio-economic profile of the region by completing the sections on human capital and the infrastructure potential with disaggregated disability data.
- Carry out the situational analysis within RDS and RSP through accessibility, non-discrimination and participation of people with disabilities in regional development processes and reflecting their situation in each area of development.
- Analysis of the impact of proposed measures within the RDS and RSP on people with disabilities in the region.
- Revision of ROP indicators from the perspective of inclusive development and disaggregated data collection on the basis of disability in all projects included in the ROP.
- Establishing initial values, targets and progress indicators for monitoring and assessing the impact of projects included in the ROP on people with disabilities.
- Proposal for new actions to facilitate the social inclusion of people with disabilities based on the information obtained from the monitoring and evaluation of ROP implementation.
- Harmonization of RDS measures with the nationalized Sustainable Development Objectives and with the objectives of the National Program for Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities for the years 2017-2022;

Examples of actions targeting regional development projects funded by the NFRD and other external sources:

- Developing Viable Project Concepts by including the disability dimension from the incipient phase;
- Inclusion of the requirements for ensuring accessibility of infrastructure, services and products for persons with disabilities in the Guidelines for users regarding the submission of project proposals, in the Task Specifications for the implementation of projects, organization of public procurement;
- Elaboration of project documentation with clear accessibility requirements and compliance with international standards in the field of accessibility;
- Estimate the cost of projects to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities (barrier removal, reasonable accommodation, accessibility provision, purchase accessibility equipment, etc.).
- Assessing the impact of projects on the environment and social environment, including the extent of disability and accessibility;
- Monitoring compliance with accessibility of infrastructure, goods and services for people with disabilities under Project Monitoring Plans;

- Evaluation of accessibility of infrastructure, goods and services for people with disabilities in reception for finishing works in the implemented projects, involvement of persons with disabilities in order to assess the accessibility, etc.

Empowerment of interested parties by:

- Informing representatives of LPA beneficiaries of the projects on importance of accessibility for people with disabilities in the regional development projects.
- Inclusion in the Training Programs of a module on ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities (legal provisions, accessibility standards, contraventions, good practices).

Examples of actions proposed by area of intervention:

IN THE FIELD OF RLR

- Evaluating feasibility of projects from the point of view of ensuring RLR accessibility for people with disabilities, especially on the road sectors that are in the urban settlements and on the road sectors where the stations, public institutions are located.
- Estimation of costs and allocation of resources for accessibility work for people with disabilities (removing barriers to pedestrian crossings, pavement entrances on the sidewalk, station entries, construction of accessibility slopes, installation of tactile pavement, etc.).

IN THE FIELD OF WSS

- Collect and analyze comparative data on access to WSS households with people with disabilities and without people with disabilities.
- Take steps to ensure connection to WSS households with people with disabilities (e.g. facilities, public-private partnerships).

IN THE FIELD OF SWM

- Ensure accessibility of SWM services for persons with disabilities in the projects (e.g. placement of collection urns in accessible areas without physical barriers, establishment of periodic waste collection at home, provision of accessibility of the route to collecting urns).

IN THE FIELD OF EE

- Ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities when carrying out works to ensure energy efficiency: for example, when replacing doors, fitting luminaires in buildings, painting of walls, accessibility standards for physical, sensory disabilities must be respected.

IN THE FIELD OF BSI

- Ensure accessibility of new jobs created through projects;
- Reasonably adapting employment opportunities for people with disabilities;
- Ensure informational accessibility for people with disabilities (materials in accessible format);
- Encourage and support people with disabilities and/or their families in starting a small business;

IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM

- Inclusion in the studies carried out in the field of regional tourism of a chapter regarding evaluation of the accessibility of tourist destinations and services for persons with disabilities. Inclusion of accessibility perspective, based on the new concept of "inclusive tourism" or "accessible tourism".
- Develop a guide on site accessibility, information accessibility and accessibility of services and events for people with disabilities.

- Mapping tourist objectives/routes in the region applying the accessibility criterion for people with disabilities;
- Remove barriers and ensure reasonable adaptation of areas in case of repairs, fitting-out and endowment of tourist accommodation units so that they can be used by disabled persons (special attention will be given to sidewalks, passages, parking, stop stations, local entrances, sanitary groups, etc.);
- Training of project beneficiaries in the field of accessibility of tourism infrastructure as well as accessibility of services and events for people with disabilities;
- Promotion of accessible tourism in a set of promotional materials (brochures, posters, maps and catalogs) on the destinations and tourist routes in the region.

In order to monitor inclusion of the disability dimension in the ROP projects, we'd like to propose examples of specific indicators for inclusive development (Table 1).

TABLE 1 Specific Indicators by Fields of Intervention

Field of intervention of the projects included in POR	Specific recommendations (examples of indicators)
Road renovation projects;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of beneficiaries with disabilities from the total number of project beneficiaries; ▪ % of accessible passes on repaired/renovated road sections; ▪ % of accessible sidewalks on repaired/renovated road sections; ▪ % of accessible stations on repaired/renovated road sections; ▪ Accessibility costs (for example, construction of slopes at border crossing / entry on the road from pavement, installation of tactile pavement, etc.)
Projects for drinking water supply and sewerage;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share of households in which persons with disabilities are connected to water supply / sewerage services (compared to share of households in which there are disabled persons connected to water supply / sewage services in the same locality / same localities);
Projects targeting solid waste management;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of households with disabled persons with access to <u>accessible SWM services</u>;
Energy efficiency projects for public buildings;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of accessible buildings for people with disabilities as a result of EE work
Projects aimed at developing business infrastructure;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of beneficiaries with disabilities from the total number of project beneficiaries; ▪ Number of persons with disabilities who were employed as a result of project implementation; ▪ Number of jobs that are reasonably adapted to the employment of people with disabilities; ▪ Number of persons with disabilities who have received consultancy; ▪ Number of people with disabilities who started small businesses as a result of project implementation.

Tourism projects;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of the objectives / routes / tourist destinations with assured accessibility as a result of the implementation of the projects; ▪ Number of the beneficiaries of projects trained in the accessibility of tourist infrastructure and accessibility of tourist services and events for people with disabilities; ▪ Number of events held in accessible locations for people with disabilities; ▪ Number of persons with disabilities involved in the conduct of events; in assessing accessibility;
--------------------------	---

It should be noted that the above recommendations are just a few examples to illustrate how to include disability issues in regional development documents. In order to achieve inclusive development for people with disabilities and their involvement, a constant effort is needed to bring together the efforts of all actors involved in development processes at all levels and systematic and comprehensive approach to accessibility and human rights issues in all development programs and projects.

Annex 1 Agenda 2030: Development and Disability

AGENDA 2030 FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE DISABILITY DIMENSION!	
<p>"Disability", "Disabled persons" are specifically mentioned 11 times in Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development!</p> <p>"Vulnerable people" are specifically mentioned 6 times in Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, people with disabilities being part of "vulnerable people"!</p>	
5 OF 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES REFER DIRECTLY TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES!	
<p>4 Quality education</p> 	<p>Ensure equal access to education by creating inclusive learning environments and by providing the necessary assistance to people with disabilities at all levels of education!</p>
<p>8 Decent work and economic growth</p> 	<p>Promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment, enabling people with disabilities to have full access to the labor market!</p>
<p>10 Less inequality</p> 	<p>Increasing the social, economic and political inclusion of people with disabilities!</p>
<p>11 Sustainable cities and communities</p> 	<p>Creating accessibility for cities and water resources, an accessible and sustainable transport system, ensuring universal access to public spaces, which must be safe, inclusive, affordable and green!</p>
<p>17 Objective partnerships</p> 	<p>The importance of collecting data and monitoring Sustainable Development Goals - Gathering disaggregated data by disability criterion!</p>

Source: United Nations Organization

Annex 2 Contraventions for violation of the rights of persons with disabilities



Alliance of Organizations
for Persons with Disabilities
in the Republic of Moldova

Association "Alliance of Organizations for Disabled Persons in the Republic of Moldova" (AOPD) is a union of 29 local and national NGOs that promote the rights of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Moldova. The Association aims to develop common approaches and principles for promotion of social inclusion, rights and improvement of quality of life for people with disabilities and their families.



SANCTIONS

according to the Contravention Code of the Republic of Moldova

- Fine from 36 to 90 conventional units* for a physical person.
- Fine from 60 to 240 conventional units for a person in charge.
- Fine from 180 to 300 conventional units for a legal entity.

* Conventional unit = 50 lei (02.2018)

CONTACT DETAILS:

Alliance of Organizations for Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Moldova

Republic of Moldova, Chisinau municipality,
Serghei Lazo street, 4, MD-2012,
IDNO 1013620006757.

Tel: +373 22 23 42 61

E-mail: aopdmoldova@gmail.com
www.aopd.md, www.incluziune.md



This material was developed within the framework of the Project "Advocacy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities II", implemented with the support of IM Swedish Development Partner