

ANNEX 1: POVERTY AND DISABILITY: VOICES OF THE AMERICAS

A recent study on the link between poverty and disability conducted by Inclusion International Status Reports on Poverty and Disability in the Americas; *Voices from the Americas (Inclusion International, 2004)* points to the linkages between each of the Millennium Development Goals and the issues of exclusion and poverty faced by people with disabilities and their families. The following summary of recommendations is taken from that report:

Millennium Development Goal	Data Shows	Families Tell Us	Recommendations
1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty For People with Disabilities and their Families	The World Bank estimates that people with disabilities account for as many as one in five of the world's poorest people, suggesting that 260 million (43%) of the estimated 1.3 billion people world wide living on less than \$1 per day have a disability.	Due to lack of inclusive education, basic services and health care, people with disabilities are prevented from integrating into society. It is very difficult to gain employment with a lack of training and facing employer discrimination. Without a job or an education people with disabilities cannot break the cycle of poverty.	Processes to mainstream disability in poverty reduction strategies need to involve civil society organizations (DPOs and family associations). This will require tools and resources to support the participation of these groups in PRSP processes for example.
2. Achieve Inclusive Education	Recent UNESCO studies suggest the highest incidence and prevalence of disabilities occur in the poorest areas, where less than 2% of children with disabilities attend school.	The systematic discrimination and segregation of children with disabilities extends to the classroom where teachers have not been properly trained, and inadequate resources are in place to develop inclusive education for all children.	Education reform processes must include consideration of marginalized groups in society. The majority of the population of students in many developing countries can be considered part of a marginalized group. This means education policy MUST address the needs of a wide range of learners. Inclusive Education is the answer.
3. Promote Gender Equality for Women with Disabilities	UNICEF estimates that only around 1% of girls with disabilities are literate Women with disabilities are among the worlds most disadvantaged populations.	Responsibility of care giving falls disproportionately on mothers or female siblings resulting in even fewer opportunities for female family members to gain employment or complete schooling.	Strategies to address gender equality for women with disabilities must be developed in the context of mainstream economic and social policy. Many strategies to address women's issues in the development context have not been successful in understanding the gender implications for policy options. Knowledge of the key development issues for women with disabilities and mothers of children with disabilities would significantly impact on policy alternatives and programmes in health, employment, education etc.