

# Evaluation Synthesis on Disability Inclusion

8 April 2025

Report number: IED-24-006



## INSPECTION AND EVALUATION DIVISION

Function                      *“The Office shall evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the Organization. It shall conduct programme evaluations with the purpose of establishing analytical and critical evaluations of the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, examining whether changes therein require review of the methods of delivery, the continued relevance of administrative procedures and whether the activities correspond to the mandates as they may be reflected in the approved budgets and the medium-term plan of the Organization;”* ([General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B](#)).

### **Project team members include:**

Angela Arévalo, Team Leader  
Tiantian Xiang, Team Member

Contact Information        **OIOS-IED Contact Information:**  
phone: +1 212-963-8148; fax: +1 212-963-1211; email: [ied@un.org](mailto:ied@un.org)

**Demetra Arapakos, Director**  
Tel: +1 917-367 6033, e-mail: [arapakos@un.org](mailto:arapakos@un.org)

## CONTENTS

Summary .....	3
Introduction .....	4
Disability Inclusion Evidence Mapping .....	7
Mainstreaming disability inclusion.....	10
Disability Inclusion Activities .....	15
Outcomes In Disability Inclusion .....	20
Recommendations on Disability Inclusion .....	22
Conclusion .....	24
Annex 1. Analytical framework for the evaluative evidence on disability inclusion .....	25
Annex 2. Abbreviations. ....	26

## SUMMARY

This synthesis report provides a summary of evaluative evidence on disability inclusion from evaluations produced by United Nations Secretariat entities. It aims to foster learning by presenting findings and insights on disability inclusion. The synthesis focused on evaluative evidence for disability inclusion mainstreaming practices, activities, outcomes, and recommendations.

The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS), adopted in 2019, underscored the United Nations commitment to incorporating the rights of persons with disabilities across all its work. Following the launch of UNDIS, the United Nations Evaluation Group issued guidelines in 2022 to further guide the incorporation of disability inclusion in evaluations.

The synthesis analysed 104 evaluations, produced between June 2019 and December 2023, from a purposive sample of ten Secretariat entities. These ten entities were included because they either “met” or “exceeded” ratings in the Evaluation Indicator of the UNDIS accountability framework and/or demonstrated the incorporation of disability inclusion considerations in evaluations based on an initial desk review.

Evaluative evidence on disability inclusion was limited, with significant variation across the ten entities in the sample. Additionally, most evidence came from project-level evaluations, as well as from country and regional level evaluations. The majority of reports examined mainstreaming practices related to disability inclusion, with fewer documenting targeted activities and outcomes.

Regarding mainstreaming practices, 85 reports mentioned one or more mainstreaming practices. Mainstreaming practices addressed programming, inclusiveness, leadership/strategic management and organizational culture areas. Evaluations identified good practices in mainstreaming, such as senior managers championing disability inclusion, establishing mechanisms to collect disaggregated data, and partnering with organizations of persons with disabilities. Constraints hindering effective mainstreaming included missing baseline data, lack of technical capacity, and a superficial approach to mainstreaming.

Disability inclusion activities were mentioned in 34 reports. These activities were implemented through five main implementation modalities: knowledge exchange, capacity building, normative support, advocacy, and direct support. Good practices in the implementation of activities included building national capacities, developing focused initiatives, and convening expert platforms. Factors enabling successful activities included localized collaboration and targeted interventions, while hindering factors included intensive resource requirements and weak political commitment.

Outcomes related to disability inclusion were limited, with only seven reports mentioning outcomes in areas such as equality and non-discrimination, situations of risk, standard of living, and accessibility. Recommendations on disability inclusion were present in 46 reports; however, only half of those recommendations were specific and actionable. Recommendations fell into three main areas: programming, capacity development, and organizational culture.

In the first four years following the establishment of the UNDIS, evidence from evaluations included in this synthesis revealed limited progress in advancing disability inclusion. While these evaluations show that initial efforts have established a foundational framework, there is still a need to move beyond positive intentions and focus on achieving measurable results. Future evaluations should capture the full scope of disability inclusion—from detailed programming initiatives to outcomes that accurately reflect improvements in the lives of persons with disabilities. Starting from the project level, this will require systematic data collection, the establishment of clear and actionable goals, and the development of performance standards that offer measurements of progress. In this regard, evaluations can be used as a key management tool to strengthen standards for disability inclusion and accountability in the Organization.

## INTRODUCTION

### OBJECTIVE

The objective of this synthesis report is to provide a summary of evaluative evidence<sup>1</sup> on disability inclusion found in evaluations produced by United Nations Secretariat entities.

The synthesis focused on the following four areas:

- 1) Mainstreaming practices that have integrated disability inclusion into work programmes;
- 2) Activities that have contributed to advance disability inclusion;
- 3) Outcomes achieved in promoting disability inclusion; and
- 4) Recommendations made to improve disability inclusion.

As part of the OIOS mandate to enable the adaptation and transfer of evaluation information in the Secretariat,<sup>2</sup> this synthesis report fosters learning by presenting insights on disability inclusion that can be helpful for senior leaders and programme managers.

### BACKGROUND

The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS), adopted in 2019, underscores the commitment of the United Nations to systematically incorporate the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs) across all pillars of its work. The Strategy consists of a system-wide policy and accountability framework with 15 performance indicators, grouped into four broad areas of 1) leadership, strategic planning and management; 2) inclusiveness; 3) programming; and 4) organizational culture.

Following the launch of UNDIS, the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Gender Equality, Disability and Human Rights Working Group issued a guidance document in 2022, providing further guidelines on incorporating disability inclusion considerations in evaluations as well as reporting on the UNDIS evaluation indicator.

The UNDIS indicator Number 10 specifically assesses the extent to which an entity considers disability inclusion in every type and all phases of any evaluation that it undertakes.

---

<sup>1</sup> Evaluative evidence refers to evidence specifically obtained from evaluations.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation 7.3 of ST/SGB/2018/3, Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (PPBME)

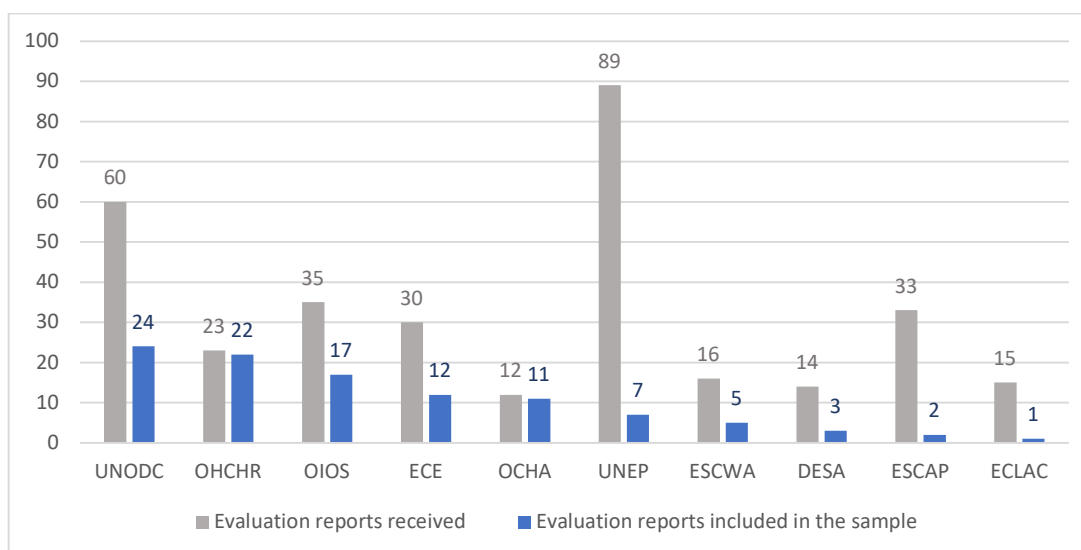
## SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The synthesis covers evaluations produced by ten Secretariat entities from 1 June 2019 to 31 December 2023.<sup>3</sup>

The synthesis used a purposive sampling strategy. Initially, OIOS identified seven entities that had either “met” or “exceeded” ratings in the Evaluation Indicator Number 10 of the UNDIS accountability framework.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, during an initial desk review, five more entities were identified for demonstrating the incorporation of disability inclusion in their evaluations. OIOS requested these 12 entities to provide all evaluation reports completed during the period covered by this synthesis. Two of the 12 did not respond.

A total of 327 evaluation reports were received from 10 entities. Of these, OIOS screened the reports to determine if they included at least one reference to disability inclusion with regard to: mainstreaming; targeted activities; outcomes; and/or recommendations. A total of 104 reports passed the screening and were included in the sample for the synthesis assessment. Graph 1 shows the breakdown of the number of reports received and the number of reports included in the sample by entity.

**Graph 1. Number of evaluation reports received and included in the sample by entity<sup>5</sup>**



Source: OIOS assessment of reports

<sup>3</sup> These entities are: DESA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, OCHA, OIOS, OHCHR, UNEP and UNODC. Please refer to Annex 2 for full entity names.

<sup>4</sup> Ratings from the 2022 UNDIS Annual Reporting.

<sup>5</sup> One report from the UNODC was produced by the Human Resources Management Section of UNOV/UNODC, while all other reports were produced by the UNODC Independent Evaluation Section.

The 104 reports were assessed using the following approach:

### **1. Development of an analytical framework to guide the review of evaluations**

In alignment with the synthesis areas, an analytical framework was developed to guide the review and coding of the evaluative evidence, as shown in the Annex 1. Most of the key dimensions in the analytical framework correspond to topics included in the UNDIS Accountability Framework and in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

### **2. Review of evaluations and coding of relevant content**

A systematic review extracting relevant qualitative data from the 104 evaluations was undertaken using Nvivo software. To enhance coding reliability and overall quality of the analysis, OIOS first developed a pilot of the coding protocol which was finalized after the first group of reports were reviewed. The team also continually met during the ongoing coding process to ensure inter-coder reliability.

### **3. Summary of key findings**

The coding extracts were analyzed and aggregated to develop the synthesis findings.

## **LIMITATIONS**

The report is subject to limitations. First, since the 104 reports included in the synthesis were produced by a non-random sample of ten entities, the findings of this review are not fully representative of the entire United Nations Secretariat. Second, the quality of the reports included in the analysis was not independently verified by OIOS. The findings of this synthesis are based on the evaluative evidence presented in the reports reviewed.

## DISABILITY INCLUSION EVIDENCE MAPPING

### ➤ Evaluative evidence on disability inclusion is limited

Only 104 out of 327 reports received from the 10 sample entities contained references to disability inclusion, with just two reports focusing entirely on disability inclusion.<sup>6</sup> Thus, in the four years following the establishment of the UNDIS, only one-third of Secretariat evaluations in the sample referenced work on disability inclusion.

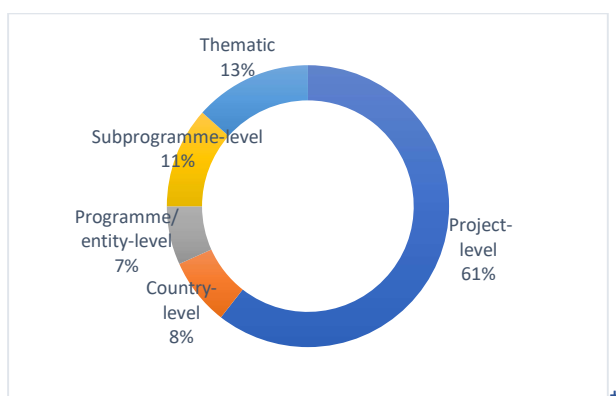
### ➤ There is high variation in disability inclusion evidence across entities

The incorporation of disability inclusion in evaluations also varied significantly across the 10 sample entities, as shown in Graph 1 above.

### ➤ Most evidence on disability inclusion is derived from project-level evaluations

Of all 104 evaluations analysed, project-level evaluations accounted a majority, as shown in Graph 2. This trend is not only observed on evaluative evidence on disability inclusion. Even more generally, most Secretariat evaluation reports are produced at the project level, as reported in paragraph 11 of the [OIOS Biennial Report](#) on Strengthening Evaluation for 2022-2023.

**Graph 2. Evaluation reports by scope (n=104)**



Source: OIOS assessment of reports

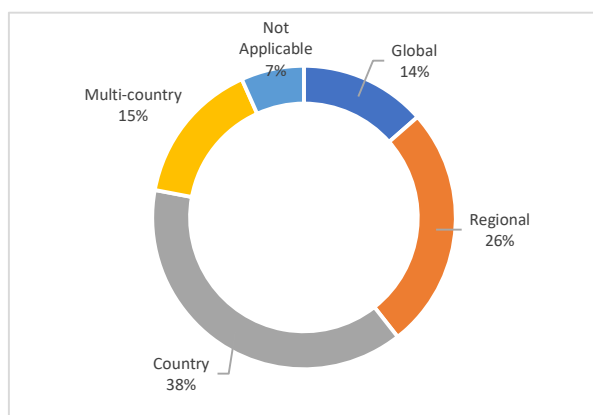
<sup>6</sup> The two evaluation reports were: 1. Evaluation the work of UNOV to implement the UNDIS indicators "Employment and Capacity Building". Human Resources Management Section, UNOV/UNODC. December 2022. and 2. Evaluation of the Policies and Programmes for Youth with Disabilities in Latin America (1819A). DESA. December 2021.



➤ **There is a diverse mix of evidence in terms of geographic scope**

A significant portion of disability inclusion evidence comes from country and regional level evaluations, as shown in Graph 3 below. This distribution suggests a strong focus on localized evaluations.

**Graph 3. Evaluation reports by geographic coverage (n=104)**



Source: OIOS assessment of reports

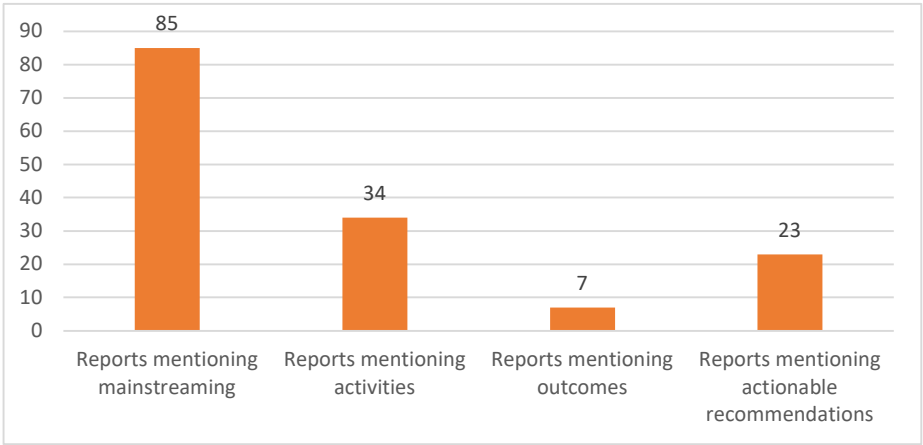
For the purpose of the analysis, the following definitions were used for geographical categories:

**Country:** Evaluations with a single-country scope; **Regional:** Evaluations covering one of the following regions: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Asia; **Global:** Evaluations with a global scope; **Multi-country:** Evaluations involving multiple countries but not grouped within a specific region; and **Not applicable:** Evaluations with a non-geographical scope, such as evaluations of a UN entity.

➤ **The majority of evaluation reports included in the synthesis examined disability inclusion mainstreaming practices, but fewer reported targeted activities and outcomes**

Of the 104 reports reviewed, 85 addressed disability inclusion mainstreaming, while significantly fewer documented activities, outcomes and recommendations, as illustrated in Graph 4 below. Given that the UNDIS implementation is still at its early stages, this uneven focus on disability inclusion practices is expected. Entities typically first adopt mainstreaming practices and then programme disability inclusion activities and achieve outcomes.

**Graph 4: Evaluation reports that documented mainstreaming practices, activities, outcomes and recommendations (n=104)**



**Source: Qualitative content analysis**

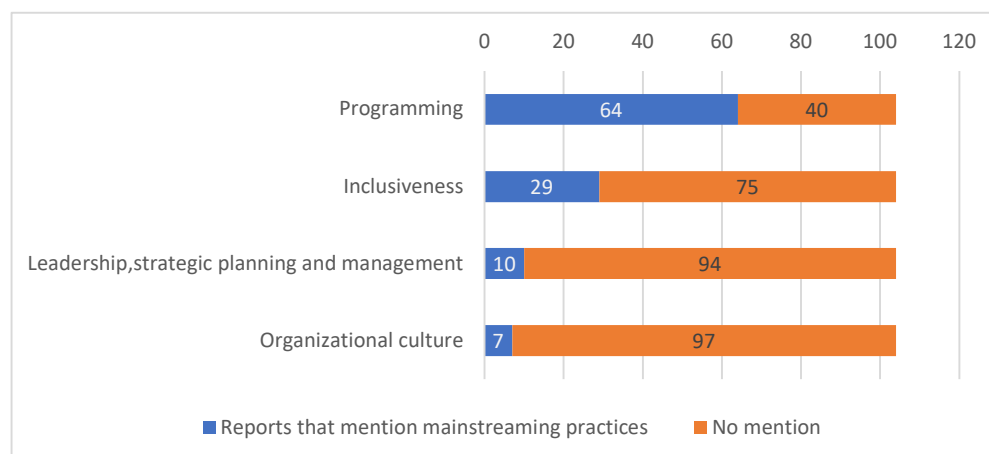
## MAINSTREAMING DISABILITY INCLUSION

*Disability is a cross-cutting issue and should be considered in all our work. Mainstreaming involves embedding their rights into the Organization's work, ensuring meaningful participation, and assessing the implications of policies or programmes. Mainstreaming integrates the concerns and experiences of persons with disabilities into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs across all spheres. (Derived from the UNDIS)*





## MAINSTREAMING PRACTICES

Of the 104 evaluation reports reviewed for this synthesis, 85 mentioned one or more mainstreaming practices. Evaluative evidence on mainstreaming was analysed across the four areas outlined in the UNDIS Accountability Framework; some reports covered more than one area. Graph 5 below shows the coverage of each of these four areas in the reports documenting mainstreaming practices.

**Graph 5: Mainstreaming practices by UNDIS area (n=104, 85 of which mentioned mainstreaming)**



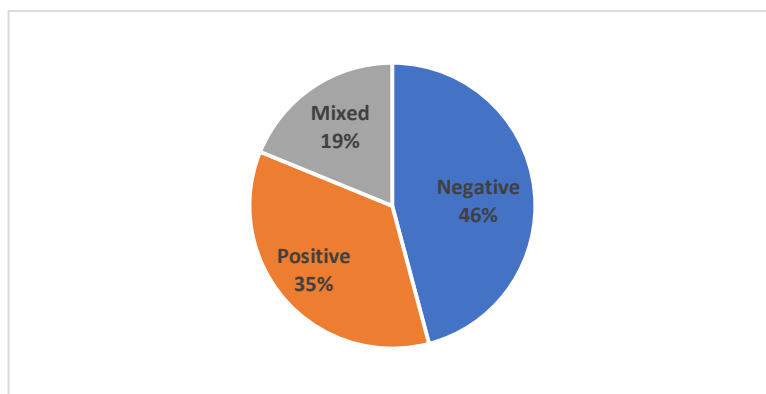
Source: Qualitative content analysis

 <p><b>Programming</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Programming refers to mainstreaming disability inclusion throughout all stages of the programme cycle, evaluation processes, and country programming, as well as inter-agency coordination mechanisms.</li> <li>➤ Evaluations that addressed programming primarily assessed whether projects had explicitly mentioned or integrated disability considerations in their design documents. To a lesser extent, they examined whether data on disability inclusion were disaggregated, documented and reflected in reporting.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Inclusiveness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Inclusiveness refers to consultation with and active involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) in both disability-specific and broader issues. It also includes having accessibility policies and strategies in place and ensuring accessible conference services and facilities.</li> <li>➤ Evaluations that addressed inclusion found numerous examples of entities consulting with persons with disabilities organizations and representatives of on broad policy and programmatic issues, as well as some United Nations economic regional commissions providing accessible conference services and facilities.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Leadership, Strategic Planning and Management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Leadership, strategic planning and management refers to senior managers championing disability inclusion both internally and publicly. It also includes the entity commitment to disability inclusion in policies and strategic planning documents, as well as the presence of a dedicated unit or expert on the human rights-based approach to disability.</li> <li>➤ Evaluations that addressed leadership, strategic planning and management found limited evidence of disability inclusion championed by senior leadership, presence of dedicated disability focal point, and organizational policies successfully integrated disability inclusion.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Organizational Culture</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Organizational Culture refers to capacity development, awareness-raising and trust building activities, as well as human and financial resources dedicated to disability inclusion.</li> <li>➤ The few evaluations that addressed organizational culture documented disability inclusion mainstreaming during candidate outreach and recruitment.</li> </ul>

## EFFECTIVENESS OF DISABILITY INCLUSION MAINSTREAMING

Evaluative evidence documented varying effectiveness in mainstreaming disability inclusion, as illustrated in Graph 6.

**Graph 6: Effectiveness of disability inclusion mainstreaming (n=85)**



Source: Qualitative content analysis

- **Negative results (46 per cent):** Nearly half of the reports that examined mainstreaming practices identified either an absence of such practices or gaps within practices.
- **Positive Results (35 per cent):** About one-third of the reports documented successful mainstreaming efforts with intentional and structured integration of disability inclusion.
- **Mixed Results (19 per cent):** Some reports noted efforts to mainstream disability inclusion, but also reported that these efforts lacked consistency, depth, and/or a systematic approach.

## GOOD PRACTICES IN MAINSTREAMING

Among the reports that documented positive results, the evaluative evidence identified a range of good practices in mainstreaming disability inclusion into all pillars of the Secretariat's work, including:

### ➤ Senior managers championing disability inclusion

Strong leadership commitment and visible championing of disability inclusion by senior management proved instrumental in driving institutional change. As an example:

- In some countries Resident Coordinators took an active role to establish inter-agency gender, human rights and disability inclusion groups to strengthen the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks

➤ **Establishing mechanisms to collect disaggregated data on persons with disabilities**

Systematic collection and monitoring of disability-disaggregated data was key to meaningful disability inclusion mainstreaming. As an example:

- OCHA's One Grant Management System allowed partners to use 'description of beneficiaries' to list selection criteria that prioritized the most vulnerable or marginalized, such as households that had people with disabilities or women and child-headed households, or gender-based violence survivors.

➤ **Undertaking consultations with persons with disabilities on broader policy and programmatic issues**

Consultations with persons with disabilities were essential for effective disability inclusion mainstreaming. As examples:

- In Kenya, persons with disabilities participated in UNODC's Urban Safety Governance Assessment surveys and interviews.
- As part of DESA's RPTC programme efforts to integrate the SDGs in the national development strategies, stakeholders from civil society, representing persons with disability, were present in the meetings.
- In Ghana, ECA's Economic Resilience Building workshop included representatives from the Association of Persons with Disability.

➤ **Partnering with organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) for mainstreaming disability inclusion**

Partnerships with OPDs strengthened disability inclusion mainstreaming by providing technical expertise, ensuring representation, and building sustainable local capacity for inclusive programming. As an example:

- OCHA's emergency response in Mozambique engaged the Forum for Mozambican Disabled Associations to support the prioritization of persons with disabilities, integrating them into the humanitarian aid distribution plans.

➤ **Providing context-specific training and learning initiatives for UN staff**

Context-specific training strengthened disability inclusion mainstreaming by addressing unique cultural and social barriers while building on existing knowledge and operational practices. As examples:

- OCHA held orientation sessions on disability inclusion for the Humanitarian Response Plan process.
- ECLAC offered sign courses in Santiago and online.
- A UNOV/UNODC evaluation reported that the Vienna-based UN organizations launched the Dignity and Inclusion Learning Initiative, offering interactive trainings to promote an inclusive workplace.

## **HINDERING FACTORS**

The evaluative evidence also identified constraints that hindered effective disability inclusion mainstreaming, including:

- ❖ Missing and/or shortage of reliable disaggregated baseline & monitoring data on disability.
- ❖ Lack of technical capacity and knowledge on how to mainstream disability among staff and/or project partners.
- ❖ “Check the box” approach to mainstreaming disability inclusion that lacked a more in-depth approach that met the specific needs and vulnerabilities of persons with disabilities.

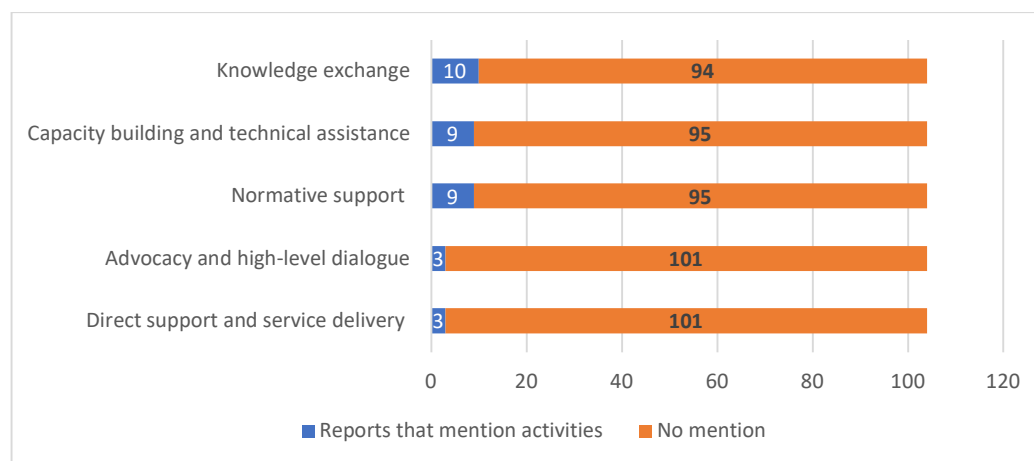
## DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTIVITIES

*Disability inclusion activities encompass efforts to promote the representation, rights, and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities across various sectors. Together, these interventions contribute to advancing accessibility, equity, and social inclusion for persons with disabilities.*

### DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTIVITIES BY IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES






Of the 104 evaluation reports reviewed for this synthesis, 34 mentioned one or more activities that contributed to disability inclusion. The analysis illustrated that the sample entities used six intervention modalities to implement these activities, as depicted in Graph 7.

**Graph 7: Activities by implementation modality (n=104, 34 of which mentioned activities)**



Source: Qualitative analysis



 <b>Knowledge exchange</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge exchange activities encompassed the production of knowledge products and research on disability inclusion to inform policy and advocacy efforts. It also involved establishing networks and platforms to foster the exchange of expertise on disability inclusion.</li> </ul>
 <b>Capacity Building and Technical Assistance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Capacity building and technical assistance activities included training and tailored support to enhance the capacity of governments and organizations to be more responsive to the needs and rights of PWDs.</li> </ul>
 <b>Normative support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Normative support activities included the provision of policy and legislative advice and the promotion of compliance with international disability rights standards and with the CRPD.</li> </ul>
 <b>Advocacy and High-Level Dialogue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Advocacy and high-level dialogue activities included advocating for the inclusion of disability considerations in national and international dialogues and policy discussions.</li> </ul>
 <b>Direct support and service delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Direct support and service delivery activities included the provision of direct services to PWDs, primarily through humanitarian assistance.</li> </ul>

## GOOD PRACTICES IN ACTIVITIES

Good practices in the implementation of disability inclusion activities included:

### ➤ Building national capacities

- An RPTC project evaluation emphasized the importance of strengthening national capacities for the sustainable implementation of the CRPD. It highlighted how, in Tajikistan, the DESA-led RPTC project supported the ratification of the CRPD and the development of a national action plan, enhancing stakeholders' knowledge and skills, securing political support, and providing a clear roadmap for implementing disability rights.

#### ➤ **Developing focused initiatives**

- An OHCHR country programme evaluation highlighted the effectiveness of focused initiatives in advancing disability inclusion. It demonstrated how, in Uganda, OHCHR supported the National Action Plan for albinism by raising awareness, building support, and addressing the needs of persons with albinism, showcasing the impact of targeted interventions and high-level advocacy.

#### ➤ **Convening expert platforms**

- An evaluation by ESCWA highlighted the role of expert platforms in sharing best practices and strengthening knowledge in disability inclusion. It illustrated how, in the Arab region, the Commission promoted regional disability inclusion through the Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability (IGED), a platform for knowledge exchange that informed disability policy discussions in the region.

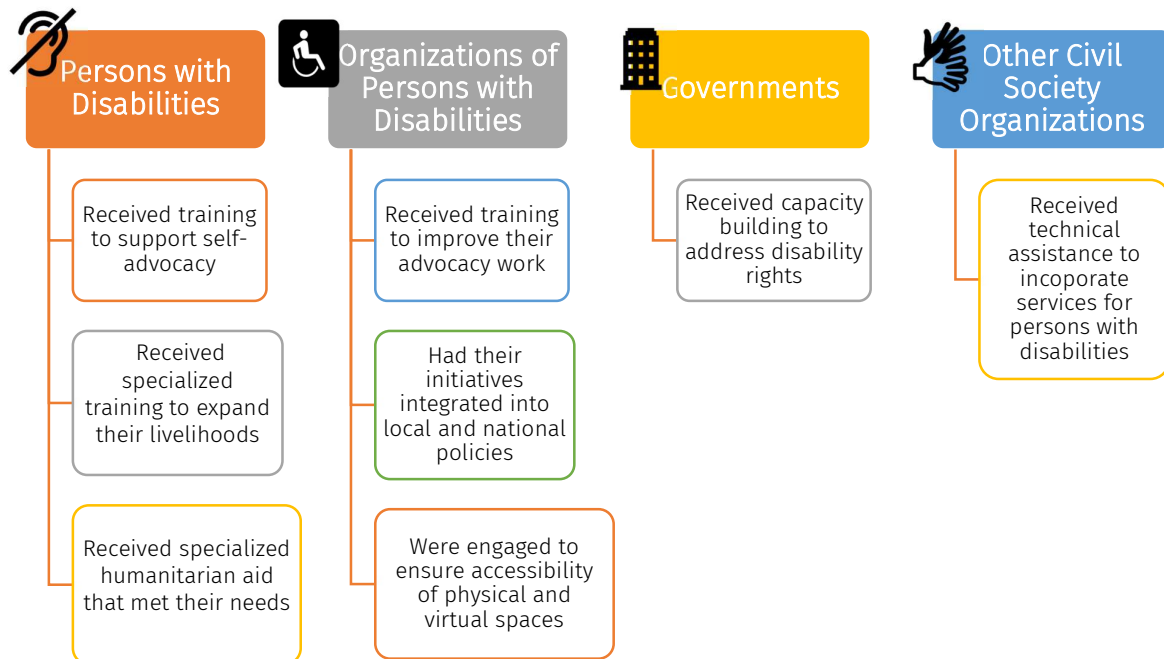
#### ➤ **Working with youth**

- Empowering young people with disabilities is crucial for enabling them to effectively advocate for their rights, as highlighted in an OHCHR evaluation. In Kyrgyzstan, the OHCHR-supported Human Rights School equipped youth with disabilities with advocacy skills and increased their awareness of human rights.

## POSITIVE IMPACT ON STAKEHOLDERS WHO RECEIVED SUPPORT

The evaluations reviewed highlighted that disability inclusion initiatives had positively impacted a range of different beneficiary groups, as shown in Graph 8 below.

**Graph 8: Stakeholders who received support**



## ENABLING AND HINDERING FACTORS

Evaluations identified factors that either enabled or hindered the implementation and success of disability inclusion activities, including:

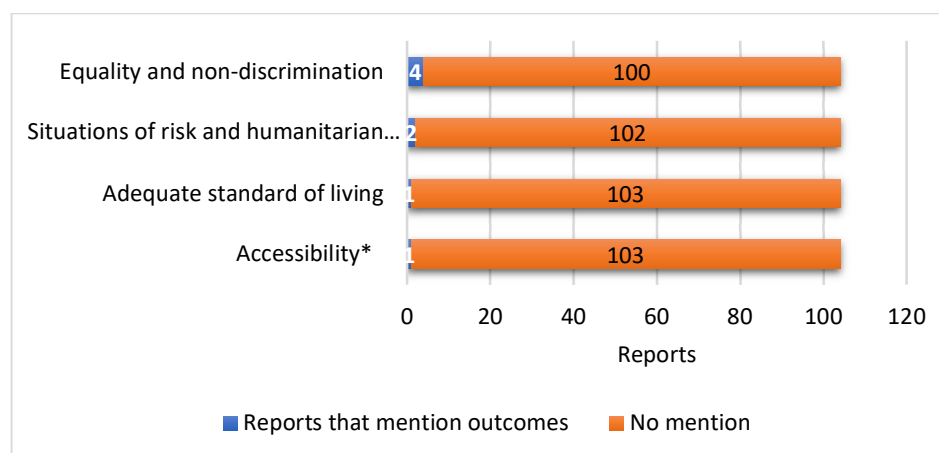
✓ Enabling factors	❖ Hindering factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Localized collaboration</b> enhanced programme sustainability and ensured accessibility by tailoring interventions to community needs.</li> <li>✓ <b>Activities with a local or regional scope</b> were more effective in addressing specific community needs and achieving quicker, visible results.</li> <li>✓ <b>Targeted interventions addressing specific disabilities</b> successfully addressed barriers and promoted inclusion.</li> <li>✓ <b>Building alliances through training and dialogue</b> helped educate and engage stakeholders, fostered understanding and collaboration for inclusive practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Intensive resource requirements</b> due to the need to accommodate accessibility requirements and engaging stakeholders.</li> <li>❖ <b>Short-term funding</b> hindered the sustainability of disability inclusion efforts, restricting long-term impact and infrastructure development.</li> <li>❖ <b>Weak political commitment</b> led to poor implementation, inadequate resources, and limited follow-up on disability inclusion initiatives.</li> <li>❖ <b>A lack of awareness of intersectional vulnerabilities</b>, such as race, gender, and disability, resulted in initiatives that failed to address diverse needs effectively.</li> </ul>

## OUTCOMES IN DISABILITY INCLUSION

*Disability inclusion outcomes were derived from the human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*

Out of the 104 evaluation reports reviewed for this synthesis, only 7 mentioned outcomes related to disability inclusion as outlined in the CRPD, as shown in Graph 8.

**Graph 8. Outcomes by the CRPD** (n=104, 7 of which mentioned outcomes)



\*The same report included an outcome on accessibility and on situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies.

**Equality and non-discrimination: 4 reports**



- Outcomes on the achievement of **equality and non-discrimination** identified in the evaluations reviewed included:
  - DESA in Tajikistan and MINUSCA in Central African Republic supported the ratification of the CRPD, which guided the recognition and exercise of the rights of PWDs on an equal basis with others.

- MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo facilitated the adoption of an organic law for the protection and promotion of the rights of the PWDs, strengthening the recognition and enforcement of their rights, laying the groundwork for reducing exclusion and promoting equal treatment nationwide.
- OHCHR Syria Office contributed to equality and non-discrimination of PWDs by promoting the principles of universality and nondiscrimination through grants and training provided to civil society organizations, enabling them to advocate successfully for rights considered neutral to the conflict.

**Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies: 2 reports**



- Outcomes on **situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies** identified in the evaluations included:
  - OCHA in Afghanistan coordinated humanitarian aid to respond to the specific needs of PWDs, particularly in relation to mental health issues.
  - OCHA in Palestine coordinated a humanitarian project to provide psychosocial and mental health support, reconstructive surgeries, and medical assistance for population injured or disabled, significantly improving these people's lives.

**Adequate standard of living: 1 report**



- One outcome referred to **standard of living**: The humanitarian project coordinated by OCHA in Palestine improved housing in Hebron's H2 area by installing ramps, accessible toilets, and grab rails to meet the needs of elderly and disabled individuals.

**Improved accessibility: 1 report**



- One outcome referred to **accessibility**: A UNODC project improved access for mobility-impaired prisoners in Malawi's Nkhonkhotakota Prison by adding ramps to WASH facilities, addressing physical barriers amid broader prison infrastructure challenges.

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON DISABILITY INCLUSION

Out of the 104 evaluation reports reviewed for this synthesis, close to half (46) included recommendations related to disability inclusion. However, of these 46 reports, only half had recommendations that were specific and actionable.<sup>7</sup> The 54 specific and actionable recommendations fell into the following three categories:

29 recommendations  
related to **programming**

21 recommendations  
related to **capacity  
development**

4 recommendations related  
to **organizational culture**

### Programming

- ✓ Develop specific project objectives related to disability inclusion by aligning activities with the CRPD and prioritizing project participants with intersecting vulnerabilities.
- ✓ Establish indicators that measure results from a disability inclusion perspective by going beyond disaggregated data to assess the actual impact on PWDs.
- ✓ Include disability inclusion considerations in the project theory of change and results frameworks to ensure interventions reflect the needs of PWDs and the assumptions about effective solutions.
- ✓ Include persons with disabilities as project participants by integrating nomination criteria to ensure their participation in capacity-building and other initiatives.
- ✓ Perform vulnerability assessments and disability inclusion diagnostics to identify the needs of vulnerable groups and assess duty bearers' capacities.
- ✓ Budget for participation of PWDs by allocating funds for reasonable accommodations to enable their full engagement.
- ✓ Consult and develop partnerships with OPDs to integrate their perspectives and expertise.
- ✓ Focus on local action by tailoring interventions to the specific needs of the target communities.
- ✓ Acknowledge intersectionality by addressing the compounded challenges faced by individuals with multiple vulnerabilities.

---

<sup>7</sup> For instance, several recommendations merely stated that disability inclusion should be considered as a crosscutting issue in a project, without requesting the specific action to be taken.

### Capacity development

- ✓ Include experts in disability inclusion to guide project planning and implementation for more effective and inclusive interventions.
- ✓ Reach out to UN expertise by utilizing resources and technical support from agencies focused on disability inclusion.
- ✓ Provide trainings on disability inclusion for project staff and stakeholders to build capacity and awareness of inclusive practices.

### Organizational culture

- ✓ Increase senior management commitment by securing leadership support, public endorsements, and resource allocation for inclusive practices.
- ✓ Recruit PWDs to foster a diverse and inclusive workforce while integrating valuable perspectives.
- ✓ Include a performance standard on disability inclusion in staff appraisals to ensure accountability for an inclusive work environment.
- ✓ Increase communication efforts through updates, newsletters, and workshops to raise awareness of disability inclusion.



## CONCLUSION

In the first four years following the establishment of the UNDIS, evidence from evaluations included in this synthesis revealed limited progress in advancing disability inclusion. While the majority of evaluations provided data on the extent of integration of disability inclusion through mainstreaming practices, there was significant less evaluative evidence on the implementation of specific activities and achievement of tangible outcomes. These evaluations were from entities considered to be meeting or exceeding evaluation disability inclusion standards.

The review of evaluative evidence indicated that improved assessments are needed to effectively track progress. While evaluations show that initial efforts have established a foundational framework, there is still a need to move beyond positive intentions and focus on achieving measurable results. Future evaluations should capture the full scope of disability inclusion—from detailed programming initiatives to outcomes that accurately reflect improvements in the lives of persons with disabilities. Starting from the project level, this will require systematic data collection, the establishment of clear and actionable goals, and the development of performance standards that offer measurements of progress. In this regard, evaluations can be used as a key management tool to strengthen standards for disability inclusion and accountability in the Organization.

## ANNEX 1. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE ON DISABILITY INCLUSION

Area	Key dimension
Mainstreaming practices (following the <i>UNDIS Accountability Framework</i> )	Leadership, strategic planning and management
	Inclusiveness
	Programming
	Organizational culture
Activity modalities	High-level advocacy and dialogue
	Normative support
	Capacity building and technical assistance
	Direct support/service delivery
	Partnerships
	Knowledge sharing
Intended and unintended outcomes (following the <i>CRPD</i> )	Equality and non-discrimination
	Women with disabilities
	Children with disabilities
	Awareness raising
	Accessibility
	Right to life
	Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies
	Equal recognition before the law
	Access to justice
	Liberty and security of person
	Freedom from torture or cruel, in human or degrading treatment or punishment
	Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse
	Protecting the integrity of the person
	Liberty of movement and nationality
	Living independently and being included in the community
	Personal mobility
	Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information
	Respect for privacy
	Respect for home and the family
	Education
	Health
	Habilitation and rehabilitation
	Work and employment
	Adequate standard of living and social protection
	Participation in political and public life
	Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport
	Data on disability inclusion
	Other

## ANNEX 2. ABBREVIATIONS

CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAMOD	Forum for Mozambican Disabled Associations
IGED	Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPDs	Organizations of Persons with Disabilities
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
UNDIS	United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOV	United Nations Office at Vienna