



*We have a moral duty to remove the barriers to participation, and to invest sufficient funding and expertise to unlock the vast potential of people with disabilities.*

Professor Stephan Hawking

The first World Report on Disability was published by the [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO) and the [World Bank](#) in June 2011. People with disabilities were involved in the process as authors, experts and reviewers.

The report is based on a combination of international data sets, national evidence (census, population surveys, individual interviews, administrative data registries), as well as studies such as the [Global Burden of Disease Study](#) (2004) and the [World Health Survey](#) (2002-2004).

## FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

- 1 person in 7 worldwide has a disability, that's 1 billion people. The number is rising.
- Vulnerable groups - Women, poor and older people and ethnic minorities - are disproportionately at higher risk of becoming disabled.
- There is a clear link between poverty and disability
- The report identifies barriers that limit the full participation of persons with disabilities in society

	General	Women	Men
Worldwide	15,6%	19,2%	12%
High income countries	11,8%	14,4%	9,1%
Low income countries	18%	22,1%	13,8%

*Prevalence of disability in % of population*

Have a look at the WHO's [10 facts on Disability](http://bit.ly/jSfKLS) (<http://bit.ly/jSfKLS>)

## DISABILITY AND POVERTY

The report confirms the link between poverty and disability. On the one hand, poverty can lead to disability, and a great deal of all impairments could be prevented with appropriate medical care and adequate nutrition. On the other, people with disabilities are generally poorer. Children with disabilities are less likely to enrol and stay in school compared to their nondisabled peers. Growing up, people with disabilities are often excluded from employment and generally earn less when employed. Furthermore, disability often implies extra costs, such as higher health expenditure and costs for assistive devices.

Studies estimate the increase of costs due to disability are 9% in Vietnam and 14% in Bosnia

Herzegovina. The report reiterates that: *“despite the widely acknowledged interconnection between disability and poverty, efforts to promote development and poverty reduction have not always adequately included disability.”* It also criticises the fact that people with disabilities are not explicitly mentioned in the [8 Millennium Development Goals](#). People with disabilities need to be included in (mainstream) development efforts, both as beneficiaries and in the design, implementation and monitoring of interventions.

*To achieve the Millennium Development Goals and beyond, we must empower people living with disabilities.*

Dr Margaret Chan, Mr Robert B Zoellick

# WHAT IS DISABILITY?

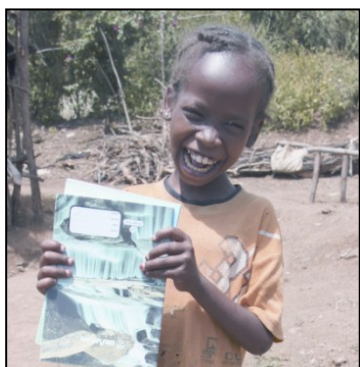


*The hardest obstacle for my independence has been the attitude of the people.* Feliza

“Disability is part of the human condition.” Almost everyone will be temporarily or permanently impaired at some point in life. In recent decades, we have begun to see people as being **disabled by the society** rather than by their physical or intellectual conditions. Society has the responsibility to provide an “enabling environment” and remove any **“barriers that hinder** [people with disabilities] full and effective **participation** in society on an equal basis with others.” These barriers can be physical and environmental (such as stairs for a

wheelchair user) as well as social and attitudinal (such as discriminative behaviours).

The report defines disability as “the umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions, referring to the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual and that individual’s contextual factors.” Above all, disability is a **human rights issue** given the numerous inequalities, violations of dignity and denials of autonomy faced daily by persons with disabilities around the world.



Belayinesh proudly shows her school book

## DISABILITY AND EDUCATION: BELAYINESH’S STORY

Born with cerebral palsy in a small town in rural Ethiopia, Belayinesh was unable to walk or even sit until she was eight years old. Fortunately, she was discovered by Siltanu, a rehabilitation worker from Light for the World who used parallel wooden bars and then crutches to train her to use her legs. After two years of rehabilitation, **Belayinesh can now walk unaided to school.** This has brought her freedom and independence. For her proud mother, Belayinesh’s future has opened up: “My daughter has many more opportunities now!”

- In Africa, 6.4% of children under the age of 14 are disabled.
- Children and youth with disabilities are **much less likely** to go to school than other children.

## THE BARRIERS ARE AVOIDABLE! RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT:

1. Enable access to all mainstream policies, systems and services;
2. Invest in specific programmes and services for people with disabilities;
3. Adopt a national disability strategy and plan of action;
4. Involve people with disabilities;
5. Improve human resource capacity;
6. Provide adequate funding and improve affordability;
7. Increase public awareness and understanding of disability;
8. Improve disability data collection;
9. Strengthen and support research on disability;

For more details, refer to the [WHO factsheet](http://bit.ly/lgNZ0k) (<http://bit.ly/lgNZ0k>).

### WANT MORE?

Read the [full report](#), the [summary](#) or get an [animated presentation](#).

More information:

[www.endexclusion.eu](http://www.endexclusion.eu)



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