

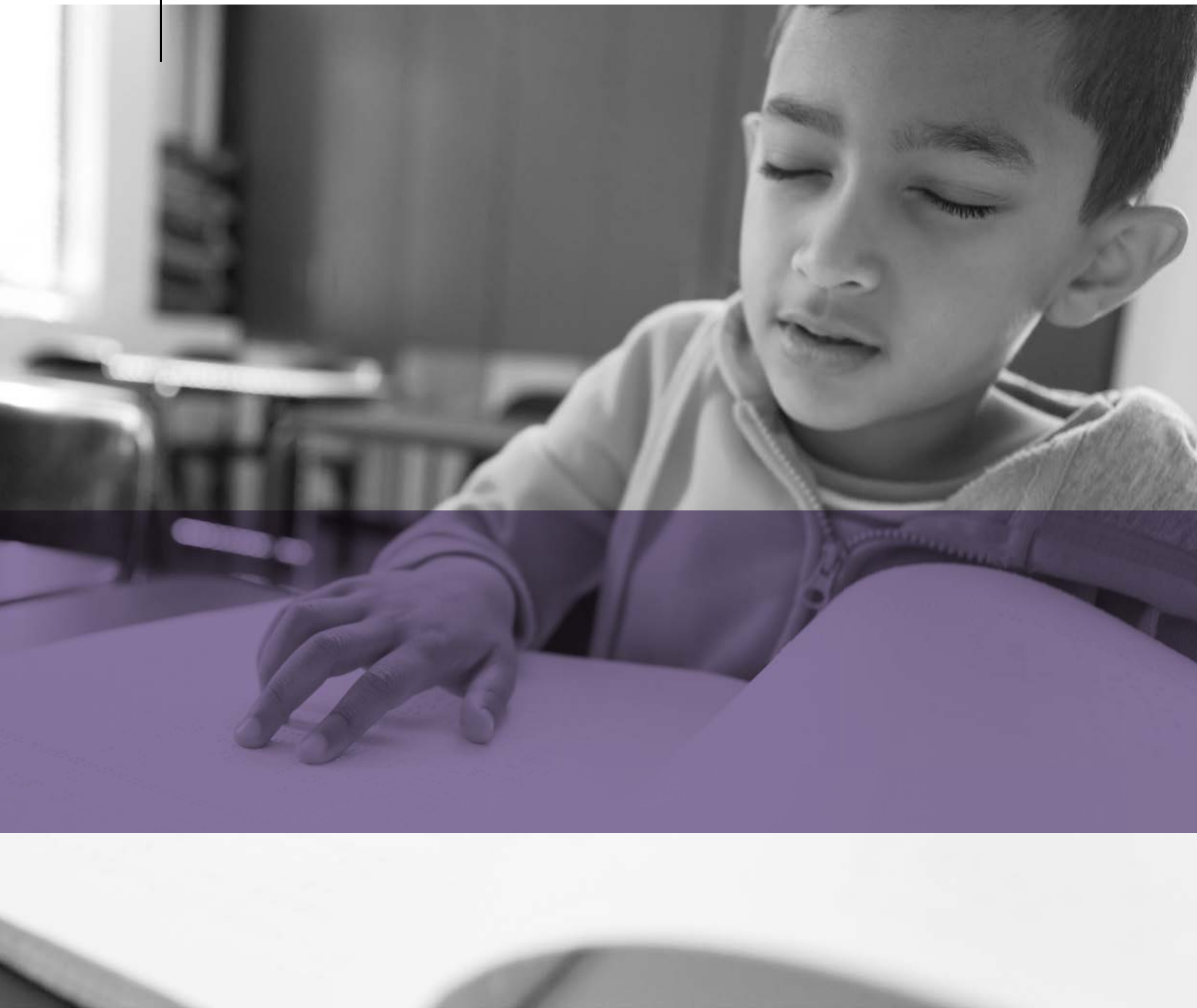


Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Strategy

Equality for all

Norway's strategy for disability-inclusive development (2022–2025)





“The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.”

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Article 1

Photo: Inclusion International

“ This is effort to promote equality and the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Summary

This strategy provides a foundation for future efforts to promote inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in Norwegian development cooperation. Norway has two primary objectives for its activities in this area: i) to promote compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and ii) to work proactively to support the core principle of the 2030 Agenda to *'leave no one behind'*. This is part of the broader effort to promote gender equality and reduce disparities.

Under Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Roughly 15 percent of the world's population, or 1.2 billion people, are persons with a disability. In low- and middle-income countries, persons with disabilities and their families are ranked at the bottom of nearly all indicators of economic development. The pandemic has exacerbated this situation.

A clear, human rights-based approach to development cooperation provides a framework for enabling rights holders to claim their rights and for ensuring that those who have an obligation to fulfill these rights do so. This is the mechanism of change for progressively realising the rights of persons with disabilities. In practice this means identifying and addressing structural imbalances and discriminatory policies, legislation and practices that lead to social exclusion of whole groups of people. In order to succeed, efforts must be focused on achieving both systemic change and change at the local level.

The development cooperation is to have a twin-track approach in which mainstreaming of the rights of persons with disabilities is combined with targeted measures. Integrating the rights of persons with disabilities as a cross-cutting element of development cooperation policy design, plans and programmes is crucial for ensuring that persons with disabilities are able to take part in social development on an equal footing with the rest of society. This is in line with the principles underpinning Norwegian development cooperation, which include human rights as one of four cross-cutting issues.



A child with a disability participates in pedagogical training. Foto: UNICEF/ Frank De Jong

There are three strategic action areas for driving change towards disability-inclusive development: changing attitudes, increasing accountability and promoting meaningful engagement.

Changing people's attitudes towards disability is essential to counteract stigmatisation and combat the ignorance that leads to exclusion. Accountability entails making challenges and needs visible, identifying necessary actions, and monitoring what is being done by whom. Efforts relating to the compilation of data and statistics as well as reporting and tracking are crucial in this regard. The involvement and participation of persons with disabilities and their organisations is vital to ensure sound, relevant policy design and inclusive initiatives that address the challenges that the target groups confront in their daily lives.

Civil society organisations often have in-depth knowledge of the local context, the capacity to drive processes forward and access to national dialogue platforms. Moreover, organisations of persons

with disabilities have unique access to the target group. These organisations are key partners in the efforts to promote inclusive development cooperation at the local, national and global levels. Multilateral actors, and the UN system in particular, are also important partners for Norway in this work.

This strategy sets out the Government's thematic priority areas and action points for incorporating inclusion into these. The areas have been chosen based on their significance for the target group and are in line with priorities relating to the Government's overall efforts and cooperation. The thematic priority areas are: political participation, climate change and adaptation, social protection and food security, inclusive employment, education, and health. The strategy presents actions for enhancing mainstreaming and identifies specific targeted initiatives. It also focuses on gender perspectives and innovation as key cross-cutting issues in all efforts to promote disability inclusion.