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Case Study: Disability inclusive education in Pakistan

Tags: Inclusion, Disability, Infrastructure, Transport, Case Study



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One billion people, or 15% of the world's population, experience some form of disability, and disability prevalence is higher in developing countries.

Well planned infrastructure and inclusive urban services are fundamental to unlocking the potential of people with disabilities. Currently, DI is not consistently addressed across DFID's infrastructure programming and policy dialogue. It is not always clear to DFID staff or partners what DI means in relation to infrastructure and growth¹, and the actions they might take to achieve it. This is coupled with a perception that addressing disability in infrastructure programming is prohibitively expensive and often unaffordable within project or programme budgets.

DFID's Disability Definition

"those who have long-term mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers (attitudinal and environmental) may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

This case study highlights the opportunity for DFID urban growth, infrastructure and transport programmes to build disability inclusion into programming activities, using examples from the delivery of school construction in Pakistan.

There are an estimated 27 million PwDs in Pakistan. According to UNESCO 1.4 million children with disabilities are not a part of the formal education system, mainly due to inaccessible infrastructure. In 2015, it was estimated that only 5% of schools across the country have any form of accessible educational infrastructure². Realizing the importance of accessibility to school buildings for all, the DFID supported Humqadam Schools Construction and Rehabilitation Programme (2015-2018) has taken key steps to improving the situation in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provinces.

¹ Results of ICED survey; report

² Educational Infrastructure Scoping Study; Aug 2015; Institute of Social and Policy Sciences (ISAPS)

The Programme

The programme aims to construct up to 20,000 additional classrooms and accompanying missing facilities, such as toilets, outdoor facilities and boundary walls, and to rehabilitate and extend almost 250 Higher Secondary Schools in both provinces.

The approach

The local community takes ownership for the design inputs to each school and prior to construction their needs and suggestions form the basis for the design brief. All of the schools covered by the programme are benefitting from new and renovated educational infrastructure that will enable students with mobility challenges to attend classes. Hard level paving, ramps, grab rails, wider doors and accessible toilet facilities along with bigger windows and highly visible chalkboards have been installed, which has enabled access for students, teachers and members of the public with mobility and vision challenges. Retrofitting of existing educational facilities to ensure accessibility is contained to where it is economically, and practically feasible e.g. ground floors made accessible whereas upper floors might not be due to unacceptable cost implications. In such cases the programme encourages the school management to make changes to the classroom usage to ensure people with mobility challenges are not required to make regular trips up and down stairs.

Selected activities undertaken at key stages of the programme lifecycle

Phase 1: Policy and Direction Setting

UD principles incorporated into project thinking from the start.

Phase 2: Planning and Design

Local community engaged to input into designs for each school.

Phase 3: Implementation and Performance Management

Community Committee for School Infrastructure established to test infrastructure and identify ongoing challenges.

Phase 4: Review and Evaluation

Lessons learned shared with government stakeholders and development partners.

Outcomes

The programme has encouraged each community to establish a dedicated Community Committee for School Infrastructure (CCSI) and have provided the requisite training. The role of the CCSI's is to understand and represent the needs of a wide range of student, teacher and other stakeholders, so that their needs are met by the Humqadam programme, local government and the schools. The CCSI's help to identify challenges related to sight, hearing, autism and learning difficulties that are not addressed through the existing physical educational infrastructure. Bespoke solutions can then be proposed and considered.

The programme also shares knowledge on lessons learned with relevant government stakeholders in Pakistan, as well as other development partners. The impact of better quality and more inclusive schools includes a much higher attendance rate, including for students with disabilities, less absenteeism of teachers and more engaged parents and communities, all of which is helping to build an effective and sustainable education system in Pakistan.

Building on successes like this project, DFID is seeking to strengthen the accessibility of all DFID-funded educational infrastructure. Under the *DFID Policy on Standards of Accessibility for Disabled People in DFID Financed Education Construction*, all new school construction that DFID directly and solely finance must incorporate UD principles to ensure the resulting construction is fully accessible to PwDs. Changes to an existing education structure which are directly financed by DFID that affects or could affect the usability of the structure must also adhere to universal design principles, unless these alterations are technically infeasible and/or constitute an undue burden to the grantee or contractor.

For further information, case studies and technical guidance on how to 'build in' disability inclusion into infrastructure and cities programming please contact the ICED team or visit the ICED website www.icedfacility.org

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Disability Inclusion considerations across infrastructure programme lifecycles

	Inception/Early Concept	Feasibility/Scoping	Strategy/Planning	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and Commissioning	Completion, handover and Operation	In use and Service Delivery
Key considerations for programme design	Policy; Finance	Policy; Regulatory; Cultural and Behavioural	Finance; Information and Data; Cultural and Behavioural	Physical and built environment; Information and Data	Information and Data	Information and Data; Physical and built environment	Regulatory; Cultural and Behavioural; Information and Data	Information and Data; Physical and built environment
Inclusive Education Infrastructure School accessibility and community committees in Pakistan through the DFID Humqadam Programme	Enabling education for the greatest number of female students was identified as a key objective of the programme.	Scoping study includes consultation with community, PwDs and advocacy groups. Disaggregated data collected which allows for a breakdown by impairment.	Community Committee for School Infrastructure (CCSI) are established and trained to identify and communicate the bespoke needs for each particular school. Costs for additional infrastructure factored in for providing access for PwDs and generally found to be acceptable and worthwhile, considering the equality benefits.	Detailed consultation with PwDs representing a wide range of impairments from mobility challenges to blindness and deafness.	CCSI supervises all on-going works. Where economically and practically feasible access for PwDs is provided for rehabilitated existing facilities. All new facilities made 100% accessible. Ramps, grab rails, wider doors, bigger windows, clear chalkboards etc. along with accessible toilet facilities (WASH).	Feedback from CCSI, students and specialist advocacy groups that represent PwDs	The CCSI is trained to remain involved in day-to-day running of the school. The programme shares lessons learned with relevant government stakeholders in Pakistan, as well as other development partners.	Maintenance budget and capacity building for CCSI and relevant government departments to ensure accessible facilities are not lost / degraded.