United Nations

Division for Social Policy Development (DSPD)
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

Toolkit on
DISABILITY for AFRICA

NATIONAL PLANS ON DISABILITY

Toolkit on disability for AFRICA

NATIONAL PLANS ON DISABILITY

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Acknowledgements

List of acronyms

AT	Assistive Technology
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CRPD	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DFIs	Development Financing Institutions
DPOs	Disabled Persons Organizations
DSPD	Division for Social Policy and Development/UNDESA
EC	European Commission
G3ICT	Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic and Cultural Rights
ICF	International Classification of Function, The World Health Organization
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITCILO	International Training Centre of the ILO
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
ITC	Information and Communication Technology
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFIs	Microfinance institutions
MSPs	Multi-stakeholder Partnerships
NAPs	National Action Plans
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NVDA	Non Visual Desktop Access
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

PCM	Project Cycle Management
PRP	Protracted Relief Programme
SABE	Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VOCA	Voice Output Communication Aids
WHO	World Health Organization

1. OVERVIEW

This Module provides guidance for the development and implementation of national action plans that either focus directly on disability or include a significant disability dimension.

Module objectives

▶ To provide participants with approaches to the preparation, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of effective national action plans to enhance the economic and social inclusion and rights of persons with disabilities, while highlighting the critical importance of implementation.

Who is this module for?

This Module is relevant to everyone who has an interest in disability or a responsibility for addressing issues of disability because of the nature of their work, including policy makers, civil and public servants, representatives of Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs), and civil society organizations, among others.

What is this module about?

This module:

▶ Explains the role national action plans can play in advancing implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and realizing disability inclusive development;
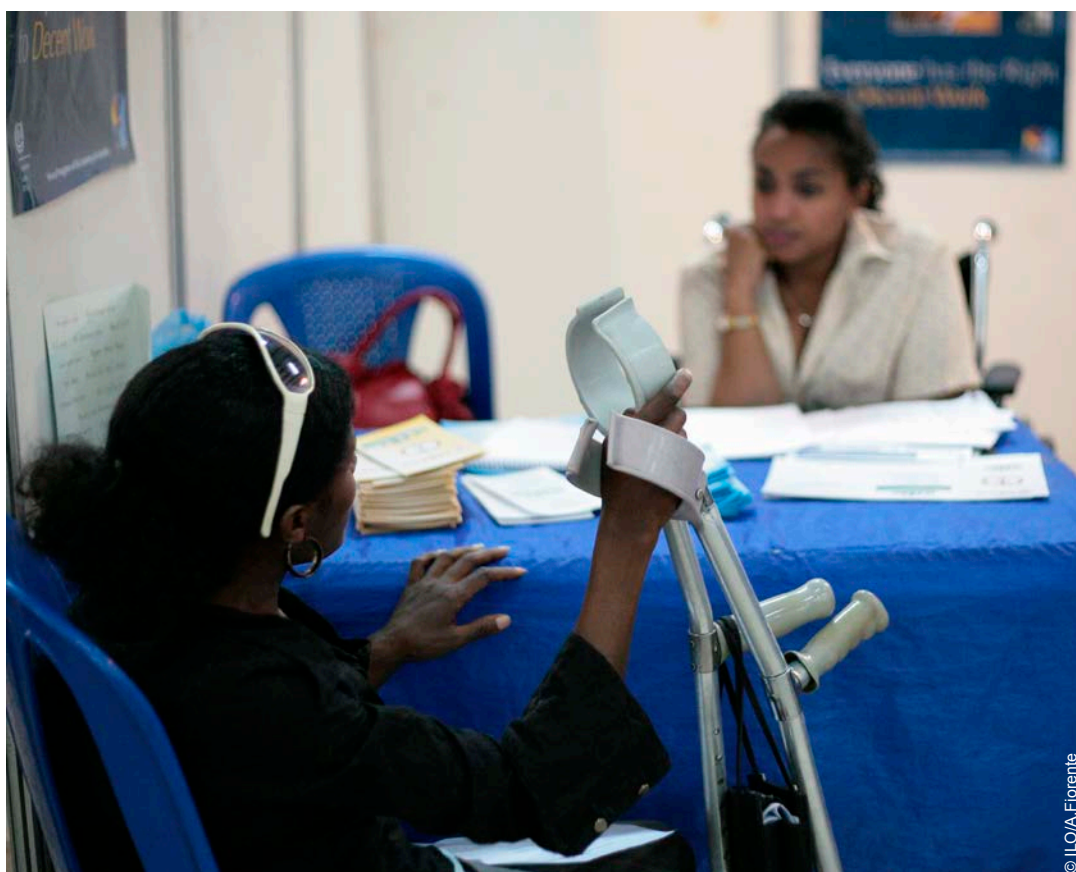
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▶ Highlights general principles applicable to the development and implementation of disability-inclusive national action plans;

▶ Provides practical guidance on the preparation, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national plans;

▶ Includes learning exercises to accompany the material; *and*

▶ Lists useful resources for additional reference.

Learning objectives

On completion of this module, participants will have:

1. discussed the role national action plans can play in advancing implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and realizing inclusive development;

2. reflected on the general principles applicable to the development and implementation of disability-inclusive national action plans;

3. identified the steps required for the preparation, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national plans.

Module map

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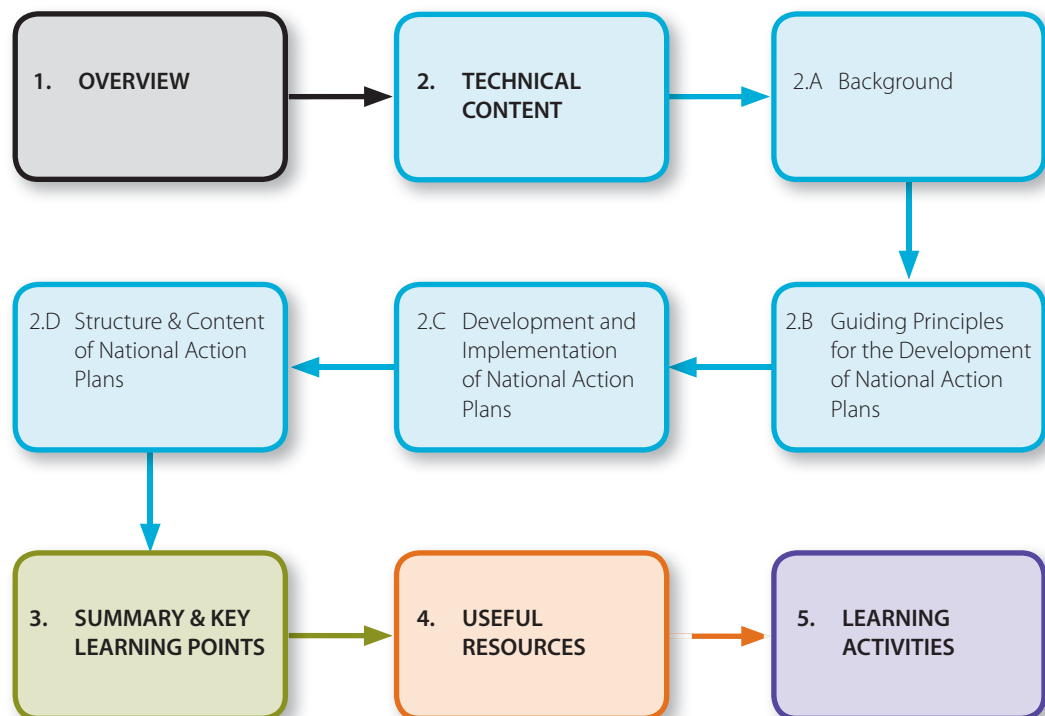
2. TECHNICAL CONTENT

2.A Background

National action plans (NAPs) are policy documents indicating the goals, activities, timelines, and resources needed to achieve specific development objectives. NAPs – as well as other types of national planning instrument - can be an invaluable tool for the advancement of disability-inclusive development and the rights of persons with disabilities. Many countries have initiated or completed processes for developing their own national development or human rights plans or sector-specific plans consistent with human rights obligations. In addition, some countries, including in Africa, have adopted thematically-focused plans such as national action plans on the rights of persons with disabilities or of women. The present module focuses on disability-specific or disability-inclusive action plans, which provide opportunities for the government and other stakeholders to:

▶ **Review** a country's concerns in the context of disability.

▶ **Mainstream** disability across all sectors and services.[1]

▶ **Raise awareness** of the social and development inclusive issues facing persons with disabilities among government officials, security authorities, civil society organizations, and the general public.

▶ **Mobilize** a broad spectrum of society to work on the rights of persons with disabilities collectively and cooperatively (for example, targeting not only DPOs but also mainstream civil society organizations, children's rights groups, women's organizations, development organizations and others).

▶ **Propose activities** that can be implemented to advance the rights of persons with disabilities and to ensure that development activities are disability-inclusive.

▶ **Set achievable targets** to reach disability rights goals, consistent with international standards and the CRPD.

▶ **Determine the necessary budgets and advocate** for the need for funding for disability policies, as well as their actual implementation.

▶ **Monitor and evaluate** the extent to which existing approaches to advancing the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities are successful and to adjust these approaches where they are not.

▶ **Promote** linkages and coordination with other national programmes, particularly in the areas of development and education; *and*

▶ **Generate** commitment to action among stakeholders.

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[1]   For further information on mainstreaming, please see the Module on Disability Inclusive Development.

Country Checkpoint

Are you aware of whether your country has:

(1) A national development action plan or programme?

(2) A national action plan on disability?

(3) other sectoral plans (for example, a national education plan, a national plan for older persons, or a child rights action plan)?

Use the examples below as a reference of different types of National Action Plans.

Examples of Types of National Action Plan that relate to Disability

General Development Plan with Disability-Inclusive Elements

- Second National Development Plan (NDPII) 2015/16 – 2019/20 "Strengthening Uganda's Competitiveness for Sustainable Wealth Creation, Employment and Inclusive Growth" in support of Uganda Vision 2040 "A Transformed Ugandan Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous Country within 30 years", available at: http://npa.ug/wp-content/uploads/NDPII-Final.pdf

General National Human Rights Action Plan with Disability-Inclusive Elements:

- National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Nigeria (2009-2013) http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/PlansActions/Pages/PlansofActionIndex.aspx

Examples of Thematic or Sector Plans that relate to Disability:

- National Plan of Action for Children in South Africa, 2012-2017, available at: http://www.unicef.org/southafrica/SAF_resources_npac.pdf
- Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan, 2007-2015, available at: http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Sierra%20Leone/Sierra_Leone_ESP.pdf

Disability-Specific Action Plan:

- Mozambique, National Plan of Action for the Area of Disability, 2012-2019
- Ethiopia: National Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities (2012 – 2021), MOLSA, Addis Ababa 2012

Regional Action Plan

- African Union: Revised African Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010-2019):
  http://www.africa-union.org/child/Decade%20Plan%20of%20Action%20-Final.pdf

2.B Guiding Principles for the Development of National Action Plans

In preparing for the design and implementation of a national action plan, the following guiding principles should be taken into account:

Participation. The design and implementation of a national action plan should involve all actors – from national, provincial, municipal and local community levels - with a legitimate stake in the process. Such stakeholders may include government officials and parliamentarians, as well as persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, who can contribute to the success of disability initiatives. Care should be taken to ensure that participation reflects the diversity of disability and includes the voices of those who may face heightened levels of exclusion based on disability coupled with other aspects of their identities, for example, gender, age or indigenous or minority status.

The active and meaningful participation of a wide, diverse and representative group of relevant actors is consistent with both the general principles of the CRPD, which call for

the full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society, and the general obligations, which require States Parties to closely consult with and actively involve DPOs in the development and implementation of decision-making processes concerning issues relevant to persons with disabilities. Moreover, participation promotes a shared sense of ownership, which is itself critical to the success and sustainability of a NAP.

Key Stakeholders for Inclusion in all stages of NAPs

Government officials (national). Officials from Government Ministries / Departments who participate in the national coordinating mechanism or focal point on disability should play a key role in the design and implementation of a national action plan. They are also well placed to share information on the plan with colleagues in their ministries in order to ensure sufficient levels of awareness and understanding of, and buy-in for, the plan.

Government officials (provincial, municipal and local). Senior officials from provincial, municipal and local government should contribute to the identification of problems within their localities that need to be addressed by a NAP. In this role they may act as the voice of their local constituencies. Senior officials from these levels of government may be responsible for co-ordinating implementation of specific elements of the NAP. They may also have an important role to play in raising awareness of, and buy-in for, the Plan among the local population.

Parliamentarians. Elected representatives (members of national parliaments and legislatures) can have an important role in the development of the NAP to ensure that it adequately addresses the needs of the population. Parliamentarians may also be involved in the plan's implementation, particularly as regards any necessary legislative reforms and in holding the government to account on the provisions of the NAP. In this regard, parliamentary committees, where they exist, can influence the design and implementation of a NAP.

DPOs and Civil Society. DPOs and persons with disabilities should be fully involved in the design and implementation of the NAP based on the principle of "Nothing About Us, Without Us". Civil society participation can also include other organizations, such as women's groups, youth groups, community development organizations, faith-based organizations, and business associations.

International, regional and sub-regional organizations. A range of international, regional and sub-regional organizations may be involved in the design and implementation of a NAP, provided that such involvement is requested by the government and does not infringe upon national sovereignty. International, regional and sub-regional organizations can play a number of roles including as implementing partners (delivering activities and providing technical expertise), donors and agents of political support. Regardless of the roles played by such organizations, the government should retain the lead role in decision-making.

The types of organizations that might be involved include:
a) United Nations entities;
b) African Union;
c) regional and sub-regional inter-governmental bodies concerned with the preservation of regional and national peace and security; *and*
d) international donors and regional financial institutions.

Accessibility of the Process. Participatory processes require the adoption of transparent and open approaches to the sharing of information relating to the NAP. It is critical that such communications are in accessible formats and that accessibility is ensured for meetings, workshops, fora or other opportunities for personal participation in the process of designing the NAP.

Sustainability. A NAP should be designed to create changes in attitudes and practices that will persist in the long term, beyond the lifespan of the plan itself. The development of national and local capacities should therefore be central to a NAP, which should:

▶ be based on a realistic assessment of existing and potential human and material capacity to support implementation of the plan;

> ▶ consider, in all its elements, how capacity can be developed to meet short and long term needs; *and*

> ▶ dedicate time and resources to the development of national and local capacities.

Coherence. To ensure policy coherence, a NAP should take account of other relevant policies, programmes and processes that are under development or already being implemented in the State in question, with a view to promoting opportunities for co-operation, collaboration and resource-sharing.

Flexibility. A NAP should be responsive to changing circumstances and should include mechanisms for on-going monitoring and periodic review. The adoption of a flexible attitude – being open to new ideas and remaining responsive to changing circumstances on the ground – can be critical in ensuring success.

A NAP is by definition national in scope, and pre-supposes a degree of central direction and involvement by the national government. In part, the development and implementation of a NAP is necessarily top-down, as nationwide responses are developed for addressing problems affecting the country as a whole. However, the process of designing and implementing a NAP should, at the same time, be reflective of the diversity of local needs, experience and capacities throughout the country. The identification of problems and solutions, the design of specific activities in local communities, and leadership in the implementation of these activities, should all emanate from the local communities themselves. A NAP should therefore be a flexible combination of both top-down and bottom-up approaches.

See Learning Activity 2.B. titled *Participation for Positive Outcomes*

2.C   Development and Implementation of National Action Plans

The development and implementation of a disability-specific or disability-inclusive national action plan is a substantial undertaking with a number of phases, as follows:

> ▶ A **preparatory phase**, during which key agencies and organizations address the institutional structures for planning and engaging in initial consultations with DPOs, relevant ministries, national human rights commissions, disability councils, service providers, international organizations and other stakeholders; this includes the gathering of relevant data for evidence-based planning.

> ▶ A **development phase**, during which key agencies and organizations elaborate the concept of a national action plan within a specific country context, intensify the consultation process, and draft the plan.

> ▶ An **implementation phase**, during which relevant agencies implement the plan.

> ▶ A **monitoring phase**, which overlaps with the implementation phase and involves a process of adjustment of plan objectives and activities in the light of circumstances.

▶ An **evaluation phase**, in which achievement of the stated goals is systematically assessed and reviewed with the aim of laying the foundation for a successor plan.

Each of these phases is considered in more detail below:

The Preparatory Phase

The first phase involves initiating a process for preparation of the NAP. The impetus for the plan may come from governmental entities, DPOs or other relevant stakeholders.

Steps in the preparatory phase can include the following:

▶ *Obtaining a formal commitment or endorsement from government.* An appropriate senior national authority should provide the mandate for the development of a NAP. A formal governmental commitment will facilitate the initial buy-in and active involvement of relevant stakeholders. The mandating authority can differ from country to country, and may include the Head of State or Government, government ministers or heads of government agencies.

▶ *Designating Leadership.* As the government provides a formal commitment to the NAP, it can also designate an institution or individual to lead its design and implementation. The designated body should have a clear mandate and sufficient political support. It should also be bestowed with sufficient seniority to effectively involve and influence both leading political actors and operational decision-makers from the whole range of departments and agencies involved in the design and implementation of the Plan. In this regard, the profile of the co ordinator or chair of the national co-ordinating mechanism can be critical. The location – that is, within which ministry, department or agency – of operational leadership can also be an important factor in determining the effectiveness of the lead agency or body in implementing a NAP.

▶ *Establishing a coordinating mechanism.* Such a mechanism, which should include both representatives of key government agencies and DPOs, should play a crucial role at all stages of the NAP. Sub-national mechanisms (e.g. at provincial, state or municipal levels) may be established to support the national-level coordinating mechanism. The roles of the coordinating mechanism in relation to a NAP can include:

- Coordinating and providing strategic leadership in the design of a NAP;
- Disseminating and promoting the NAP to relevant stakeholders, including in government, international and regional bodies, civil society and the general public;
- Coordinating implementation of the NAP, including provision of oversight and strategic management of the plan's implementation;
- Ensuring effective communication between all relevant stakeholders in the NAP;
- Coordinating the monitoring, interim evaluation and, if needed, amendment of the NAP in response to changing operational circumstances; and
- Leading the final evaluation of the NAP on its completion and determining the next steps. Where a NAP has not been created, the establishment of such a body can form the first stage in the process of developing a National Action Plan.

The coordinating mechanism leading the development of the NAP should engage involve all relevant actors early in the process and should maintain regular and

consistent contact with them. To achieve this, the national coordinating mechanism should undertake early and sustained engagement with those stakeholders who are central to providing political, operational, financial and technical support to for the Plan.

The coordinating mechanism should also consult, formally and informally, with DPOs and interest groups involved in, or likely to be affected by, the plan activities, including government (national and local), civil society and the private sector). Widespread consultation should be carried out during the design and development of a NAP in order to:

- Create buy-in and political will for the implementation of the plan;
- Generate interest and assist in with securing funding;
- Interrogate and ensure the accuracy and validity of the analysis and proposed actions;
- Inform the design and content of the draft National Action Plan; and
- Raise awareness of the goal and objectives of the plan.

▶ *Establishing a framework for participation and consultations*. Those leading the initial stages of the preparatory process should consult within government, DPOs and with other relevant stakeholders to determine who – beyond the government entity leading the process or members of the coordinating mechanism – should participate in the process and create a framework for their involvement. Opportunities for participation at various stages of the NAP process should be made public, with information disseminated in accessible formats. To ensure informed participation, the capacity needs of key stakeholders – including those within government and civil society – should be taken into consideration and capacity development opportunities provided, where necessary.

As set out in the "guiding principles" section of the present module, the designing of the NAP should be an open and consultative process, with consultations with stakeholder groups taking place periodically during its development. The key points atstages during which consultation should take place include during the initial strategic planning stage, ;and goal and objective setting (as described above, under "determination of priorities"); during the drafting of the NAP; and during its review or validation.

▶ *Determining a plan, timeframe and budget for the preparatory and development stages*. Before proceeding to the development stage of the NAP, either the Government entity leading the NAP process or the designated coordinating mechanism should prepare a time- bound work plan. The plan should identify entry points for contributions from stakeholders and should be made public upon its completion.

A funding strategy should also be drafted as part of the first stages of developing a NAP. This will require an assessment of the human and financial resources required. This may initially be relatively limited in scope, focused on the funding required to support the preparatory and development stages, but can be reviewed and updated as the development and implementation of the Plan proceed. As funding streams, whether through national budgets or international development aid, are often determined some time in advance, forward planning can be critical to securing sufficient financial support.[2]

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[2] A module on budgeting for disability inclusive development is pending.

Capacity Development and National Action Plans

A certain level of capacity is required to initiate a NAP process, which requires both the dedicated work time of officials and a certain level of knowledge of issues surrounding disability. Capacity building may, therefore, be a necessary precursor to, or at least a component of, the first stages of developing a NAP. Where necessary, external agencies such as the UN or civil society organizations are often able to provide such support.

Financing and Budgeting for NAPs

Integrating a NAP into the national development framework or strategy and accessing financial support through the national budget can bring opportunities and challenges. An advantage of support through the national budget is that funding is likely to be more sustainable in the medium-to-long term than that received from international donors. The receipt of funding through the national budget is also likely to be a product of political buy-in for the NAP, again an important factor in the sustainability of disability-related initiatives. A potential disadvantage is that there may be significant competition for funding within the national budget and compromises may therefore be necessary on the quantity and nature of activities within a NAP. Furthermore, assistance received directly from an international donor can be more flexible and readily accessed than from the national budget. In different contexts, having a NAP feature in the national budget, and therefore in the national development strategy, can be a prerequisite for receiving funding from donors, due to a commitment to align their funding with nationally agreed priorities.

The funding strategy developed for the NAP should determine whether funding is to be sought from the national budget in the short and long terms. If funding is to come from the national budget, those leading the NAP process should at the earliest possible opportunity engage with the Ministry of Finance (or equivalent), and become familiar with the process (including deadlines) of accessing support through the national budget. National budgetary frameworks often cover a period of a number of years. Engaging early in the process of negotiations for a national budget, including at the very earliest stages of the plan's development, can therefore be critical to securing the essential financial support.

Securing support through the national budget can require political support. To generate the necessary support, lobbying and awareness-raising on the NAP may be necessary.

In many countries which are recipients of international development aid, assistance given by international donors is increasingly being provided through direct budgetary support; that is, contributions to the overall national budget rather than to specific national programmes. Two consequences of this are that (1) international donors are involved in negotiations with the recipient government on their overall budgetary priorities (often through the development of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper), and therefore wield some influence over the content of the budget; and (2) international donors have fewer funds available for separate, stand-alone projects.

▶ *Preparing a preliminary baseline assessment.* A NAP should be informed by evidence-based policy-making and an accurate and realistic assessment of the national context and needs in relation to disability, taking into account local customs and attitudes. To this end, a baseline assessment should be conducted to support development of an evidence-based NAP. The assessment should include, at a minimum:

● • An overview of the existing legal and policy framework, including international commitments such as the CRPD. This should include an analysis of the extent to which the framework is or is not in harmony with the CRPD.

The analysis should also consider implementation gaps and the reason for their existence (for example, lack of awareness of laws or policies that are in place, lack of knowledge on the part of relevant stakeholders on how to implement them, etc.).

- Existing quantitative and qualitative data and information to assess the current situation of persons with disabilities;
- A stakeholder analysis in which actors are responsible for relevant sectors and therefore have a role in ensuring the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. The analysis should also consider the root causes of any disparities experienced by persons with disabilities.

The baseline assessment will inform the drafting and content of the NAP. Additional data collection will likely also be necessary during, and on completion of, implementation of the NAP.

Development Phase

During the development phase, those in charge of the NAP process should identify priorities to be included in it, and should proceed with its drafting and validation. This phase, which may be overseen by the coordinating mechanism, can include the following steps.

Determination of priorities. In most cases the baseline study will identify a number of implementation gaps where action will be necessary to advance the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Once the study has been prepared it should be disseminated in accessible formats and serve as the basis for broad consultations with both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. Consultations can take the form of meetings or workshops at national and local levels or opportunities for online or written submission of views, among others. Through the baseline study and the views of stakeholders, priority areas for inclusion in the NAP can be identified.

Preparation of a draft plan of action. A core group should be identified to lead the drafting of the NAP. This group may be drawn from the coordinating mechanism. The drafters should clearly set out the overall goals and objectives of the NAP and identify, based on the baseline study and consultations, priority areas and sectors. In relation to each area or sector the plan must set strategies for achieving objectives, including specific activities to be undertaken and plans for monitoring and evaluation within a set timeframe.

The drafting process can include the establishment of working groups for each sector to be addressed in the plan. The involvement of political and operational representatives of different governmental sectors here can be critical to the effectiveness of the NAP: they are most knowledgeable of steps that should be taken to achieve results, and of how to achieve coherence between the NAP and existing legal and policy frameworks that are in place, as well as with other national planning activities, and their support and "buy-in" for the plan will also contribute to its success.

In preparing a draft NAP drafters should consider the inter-relationship between different areas of disability programming and the importance of sequencing initiatives appropriately. For example, a given country may determine that there is a need for changes to legislation. However, in many cases certain steps may need to be taken, such as the carrying out of an analysis of the existing legal framework and the establishment of consultative mechanisms or procedures, before such amendment can take place.

The way in which different areas of disability programming interact will not be identical in every national context. However, considerations of sequencing and how different types of programming interact and depend on one another will be important in all instances.

When determining the sequencing of initiatives, the appropriateness of so-called "quick wins" (e.g. initiatives that are expected to demonstrate immediate, positive returns - "low-hanging fruit") should be considered. In the abstract, these actions may not be the highest priorities, but demonstrating early success can be important in generating momentum and buy-in for the NAP. Other factors that should influence decisions related to prioritisation and sequencing in the design of a NAP action plan include:

- ▶ levels of available capacity and financial resources
- ▶ the level of need
- ▶ the expected level of impact of the planned activities
- ▶ the likelihood of success
- ▶ whether there are particular geographical locations in which initiatives should be prioritised

Consultations. As set out above, consultations are critical to the success of a NAP. Once a first draft of the NAP has been prepared, a series of national workshops or consultations should be convened to review it. All relevant government bodies, DPOs and other stakeholders should be included and the process should ensure inclusion of organizations and persons representing the full diversity of disability. Through such consultations, drafters can ensure that the Plan:

- ▶ reflects the genuine priorities of persons with disabilities;
- ▶ addresses the issues identified by the survey or study in the correct way; *and*
- ▶ generates buy-in for its implementation.

Finalize plan. Following consultations, the draft NAP should be revised in accordance with feedback received, and the NAP should be finalized. In some cases the legal and political status of the NAP may be confirmed by, for example, endorsement of Parliament, inclusion in the Programme for Government, identification as a political priority, or a dedicated administrative structure. The NAP should then be launched and stakeholders could consider using the launch as an opportunity to raise awareness of the NAP and of the inclusion rights of persons with disabilities in the country.

Dissemination. Initial launch activities may include, for example, the staging of a national conference to discuss the NAP, and media campaigns.

Implementation Phase

Implementation is of paramount importance; there is little point in having a National Action Plan if it will not be implemented.

Co-ordination and Institutions

As with earlier phases of the NAP, implementation requires the designation of a coordinating group to lead the process. This may consist of the national coordinating mechanism that developed the NAP, or another specified implementation mechanism or group. The designated mechanism should:

- ▶ promote coordination, information sharing and relationship management between key actors involved in implementing the NAP;

► lead the development and subsequent monitoring of detailed activity plans;

► communicate information on the plan's implementation, including through dissemination of information to the public and through reporting to senior management in government ministries and departments;

► ensure adequate financial management, which may be conducted within the coordinating mechanism itself or through the government ministry responsible for finance (in either case the coordinating mechanism should have oversight of financial management and ensure that reporting is done satisfactorily and on time); and

► lead the monitoring and evaluation processes (discussed in the following sub-section).

Government ministries, departments and agencies, as well as DPOs or international partner agencies may lead the implementation of particular aspects of a NAP. In such cases, they may be responsible, for example, for:

► leading detailed planning of activities within their specific area of responsibility;

► contributing to the development of the overall NAP activity plans;

► managing the implementation of activities within their specific area of responsibility, including co-ordinating with other actors involved in implementation; *and*

► reporting to the national co-ordinating mechanism on progress made in implementing activities.

Profile and Public Awareness

A NAP may contain specific activities focused on raising public awareness and educating the public on the rights of persons with disabilities and disability issues, as well as on the activities being carried out to address them. In addition, activities should be undertaken to raise awareness of and promote interest in and support for the NAP in general.

Regular, on-going communication about the plan's implementation – including activities completed and their impact, and forthcoming activities – should be conducted. This communication should be a two-way process and allow for consultation with the public.

Monitoring Phase

All NAPs should include provisions for monitoring of their implementation; evaluation of impact; and reporting on achievements, challenges and lessons learned.

The processes of monitoring and evaluating a NAP should include and draw on as wide a range of relevant sources as possible, including implementing actors, targeted beneficiaries, and sources of statistical data that measure indicators relevant to the NAP.

On-going and regular monitoring of the implementation of a NAP should take place at regular intervals during its implementation. To ensure on-going participation by key stakeholders, governments may consider establishment of a monitoring group including a range of stakeholders, including DPOs representing the diversity of disability.

Monitoring activities should measure the extent to which implementation is:

► proceeding according to the established timeline;

► remaining within the established budget;

► visible to, understood and supported by the general public; and

► meeting the expectations of its intended beneficiaries.

Governments should make available to the monitoring group information on all relevant activities to facilitate these efforts.

Should the monitoring group find any significant deficiencies or deviations in relation to implementation, it should advise the coordinating mechanism (or other body designated to oversee implementation), which should take action, including modification of elements of the plan as needed, in order to facilitate achievement of the NAP's goals and objectives.

Evaluation Phase

The final stage of a National Action Plan is its review and evaluation and, based upon this, its revision or updating. The NAP should establish timeframes for both of these processes. Ideally, evaluation of the NAP should be carried out by an independent expert or body that was not significantly involved in its design or implementation. It should be conducted on the basis of its targets and indicators and should:

► Measure the extent to which the NAP achieved its goals and objectives;

► Highlight both intended and unintended impacts of the NAP;

► Differentiate between the NAP's engagement with and impact on women and men, as well as on children, parents and families of persons with disabilities, older persons, adolescents and youth;

► Analyse challenges encountered in the implementation of the NAP and how they were (or were not) overcome; *and*

► Identify lessons learned throughout the implementation process.

Once an evaluation of an implemented NAP has been completed, the results should be published and made available, in accessible formats, to the government; to all stakeholders involved in its design and implementation – particularly persons with disabilities and their representative organizations; to the general public; and to donors who supported its design, implementation or evaluation.

The findings of the evaluation should then provide a basis for a revision or updating of the NAP. Taking into account the results of the evaluation, as well as the feedback of stakeholders based on the evaluation, the NAP should be updated to build on areas of success and adjust approaches that have been less successful.

International Reporting on NAPs

Governments also have opportunities to report on the outcomes of their NAPs at international level in the context of their reports to the Universal Periodic Review and to the CRPD Committee, as well as other relevant treaty bodies such as the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Voluntary reporting under the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals also provides an important opportunity to report on achievements in the implementation of a disability NAP. DPOs and other stakeholders can also report via these avenues through the submission of parallel reports. Reporting on a government's decision to initiate a process to develop a NAP may also include a request for international cooperation and assistance – in terms of both technical and financial support – in the design and implementation of the Plan.

2.D Structure and Content of Disability National Action Plans

The structure and content of a NAP should reflect the unique circumstances, context and situation of the country in which it is to be implemented. Templates, experiences and effective practices from other countries may serve as reference materials but, if used, should be adapted to the specific context of the country for which the plan is designed. While the content and structure of NAPs, whether disability–specific or focused on development, human rights or other broad issues, will vary according to the country context in terms of structure or administrative arrangements, NAPs often include a number of common elements, as described below.

Statement of commitment: this should refer to the purpose of the plan and to its relationship to the CRPD. It may also refer to other relevant commitments at international level, such as other international human rights or development norms or agreements, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, as well as to national-level commitments or laws.

Background and context: this may include an overview of the key findings on the situation of persons with disabilities in the country, as well as efforts so far made to address the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in development. This section may also describe how the CRPD relates to existing government policies and strategies, for example in relation to poverty reduction or development.

Overarching Goals: the plan should articulate an overall goal that is consistent with internationally- agreed human rights or development norms or standards. Whether the plan is a general National Action Plan, such as a development plan or a national education or health plan or a disability-specific one, a core benchmark for disability inclusion should be the CRPD.

Response: in some cases these are organized goal by goal; they may include:

▶ **Relevant international and domestic law and principles.** While the National Action Plan may focus on the national, provincial, municipal and local contexts, its goals should be aligned with the CRPD, as well as relevant regional and national commitments and laws.

▶ **Specific goals and objectives.** A NAP should have goals and strategic objectives that are clearly defined, achievable and measurable. The successful achievement of the strategic objectives should, collectively, result in fulfilment of the plan's overall goals. A number of factors may inform how goals and objectives are formulated, including the findings and recommendations of a comprehensive study or a survey on disability issues. Goals and objectives will vary from country to country.

▶ **Activities.** A NAP should also list the activities that will be taken to achieve goals and targets. Activities are at the heart of a NAP, as they constitute the specific steps to be taken in implementation of the Plan's objectives. Activities can consist of the creation of new programmes or mechanisms, specific projects or stand-alone activities.

▶ **Performance indicators.** During and following the implementation of a NAP, evaluations should be carried out to determine the extent to which the plan is on track to or has achieved its objectives and goals and also to aid consideration of next steps, if any, to be taken. In order for evaluations to take place, the plan must

include performance indicators which will be most useful if they are simple and can be clearly understood by all stakeholders, especially those who will have a role in implementing the activity.

▶ **Identification of actors responsible for each action point.** For a plan to be implemented it is critical that it identifies those responsible for carrying out its provisions. This can include naming the branches or sectors of government at all levels (national, provincial, municipal and local) and specifying the mechanisms by which civil society, including organizations of persons with disabilities, should contribute.

▶ **Timeframe.** A timeframe should be established for every planned activity in the NAP. National Action Plans often cover periods from one to five years, though there is no single ideal timeframe for the implementation of activities within a NAP, or of the NAP itself. The timeframe set should be realistic, that is sufficient for all of the objectives of the plan to be met. Notwithstanding the importance of having a set timeframe for the plan's implementation, those responsible for implementation should, through an effective process of monitoring and evaluation, be flexible and amend the timeframe as necessary and if appropriate.

▶ **Linkage to related policies, programmes and processes.** In formulating a NAP, connections should be made with other relevant national policies, programmes or processes, as well as with national strategic objectives. Doing so can not only maximize the impact of a National Action Plan but also enhance overall policy coherence, maximise efficiency and seize opportunities to reinforce government policy. In seeking to identify connections, the designers of a National Action Plan should first identify other policies and initiatives that may in some way relate to or connect with the National Action Plan; second, ensure that the goals, objectives and methods of the National Action Plan are consistent with other policies, programmes and processes; third, Identify where the National Action Plan complements, overlaps with or undermines other policies or initiatives; and fourth, ensure that opportunities to make efficiency gains – potentially through sharing of resources, combining of activities or re-design of the plan – are seized..

▶ **Budget.** The National Action Plan should set out the budget for its implementation and also identify the source of funds. Financial and human resources are essential to launching new activities in the health and social sector.

The content of a National Action Plan should reflect the national situation, including needs and priorities identified through the disability study or a survey and consultations conducted in the process of developing the National Action Plan. For this reason, while it is often instructive to look at examples of NAPs on disability from other countries, or other types of National Action Plans within one's own country, templates should not be imposed or adopted uncritically or without adaptation to the local context. Each country has its own individual circumstances and there is no one size that fits all. In elaborating the plan content, attention should be given to the situation of persons with disabilities experiencing heightened levels of discrimination, due either to the type or multiple forms of disability or to other aspects of their identities – for example women, children, youth, older persons, indigenous peoples and minorities, migrants or refugees.

In terms of areas that may be addressed, the following illustrations are by no means exhaustive, but provide some indication of the kinds of commitment that may advance the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of National Action Plans:

▶ **Commitments to international and national disability law frameworks.** These might include commitments such as ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and other international human rights instruments, including an outline of specific steps that the States will take to achieve the objectives. Other measures include ratification of the Optional Protocol to the CRPD. Other commitments within this category could include overcoming any delays that impede the State's compliance with its reporting obligations to the CRPD Committee, including the establishment of time-frames and the withdrawal of any reservations the State has expressed on the CRPD (as well as other international human rights instruments).

▶ **Commitments to take legislative and administrative measures to entrench the recognition and observance of the rights of persons with disabilities, including in relation to economic, social and cultural rights.** These might include commitments such as:

- undertaking measures to eliminate disability discrimination in the areas of economic, social and cultural rights;
- the development of benchmarks for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights in line with the country's human rights obligations; *and*
- the development of specific programmes to achieve associated targets in areas such as:
  - The right to an adequate standard of living, including nutrition and housing;
  - The right to health;
  - The right to rehabilitation;
  - The right to education;
  - The right to social security;
  - The right to take part in cultural life;
  - The right to work;
  - The right to just and favorable conditions of work and to form and join trade unions.

▶ **Commitments to fund a National Action Plan on Disability.** An approach that could be useful, as is followed by many countries, is to negotiate with line ministries and local authorities to mainstream disability in their sectoral plans in order to increase the resources and competences dedicated to disability issues. This is commonly termed a twin-track approach.

▶ **Commitments to protect the civil and political rights of persons with disabilities.** These could include, for example, commitment to enacting legislation to protect civil and political rights, including (i) legislation to address issues such as violence against persons with disabilities; (ii) legal reform recognizing the legal capacity of persons with disabilities, (iii) measures to enhance access to justice for persons with disabilities, including provision of adequate resources to ensure that the justice system is accessible, that police and justice personnel protect the rights of persons with disabilities, and that correctional institutions accommodate prisoners with disabilities and training on disability rights issues for the judiciary, police, correctional services workers and security authorities.

▶ **Commitments to inclusive development and group rights.** Measures undertaken in this context could include, for example, promotion of awareness of disability-inclusive development among government national planning or development assistance agencies; promotion of disability-inclusive development

and human rights issues in international economic fora; development of policies that integrate the rights of persons with disabilities into the development process; development of policies to protect the linguistic identity of persons with disabilities including persons who are deaf; and strengthening the ability of indigenous and minority peoples to maintain and develop their distinct identities and to make decisions on matters affecting them.

▶ **Commitments regarding national institutions.** Measures in this context could include establishing or designating a national human rights institution to monitor implementation of the CRPD; expanding or strengthening the disability-specific mandate of an existing national institution; and increasing resources available to a national human rights institution to monitor disability rights, particularly when the institution is given additional functions in implementation of the National Action Plan.

▶ **Commitments regarding capacity development.** Throughout the process of developing and implementing a NAP, maximising the potential of existing capacity and developing new capacity should be central elements of all areas of programming. A NAP may set out a capacity-building strategy which should correspond to any capacity issues identified in the baseline study, seek to maximise existing national and local capacities within the governmental, nongovernmental and private sectors, and set out how capacity-building support will be accessed. The strategy should minimise reliance on external support and maximise use of national and local capacities in order to create a sustainable foundation of human and physical capacity to implement the inclusion rights of persons with disabilities in the long term.

▶ **Commitments to awareness-raising of disability rights.** Measures in this context could include development of a comprehensive programme of disability rights education using the guidance provided in the United Nations "Guidelines for National Plans of Action for Human Rights Education"; disability rights training for police, prison officials, judges, magistrates, and lawyers; development of disability rights curricula at all educational levels (primary, secondary and tertiary); and public information and awareness campaigns to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities.

▶ **Commitments to civil society participation.** Proposed legal and administrative measures could involve facilitating the activities of DPOs and other NGOs, and involving persons with disabilities and DPOs in the implementation and monitoring of the action plan.

▶ **Commitments to international action.** Proposed measures should be taken, first, to strengthen cooperation with regional and international human rights organizations, where appropriate, drawing on international funding and technical assistance for the implementation of National Action Plan components; and second, where appropriate and requested, to provide funding and technical assistance for the promotion and protection of human rights in other countries.

See Learning Activity 2.D. titled *Priorities & Commitments*

3. SUMMARY & KEY LEARNING POINTS

The present Module has set out approaches for preparing an effective NAP focusing on disability or including a significant disability dimension, which can be an important mechanism in advancing implementation of the CRPD and the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development. The Module proposed guiding principles for the preparations of NAPs, and described the different stages of developing and implementing effective NAPs. Finally, the module described possible structural elements for a NAP, and provided examples of various issues on which NAPs sometimes focus.

4. USEFUL RESOURCES

Guidelines on the Preparation of NAPs

📖 UNDESA, Guide to the Implementation of the World Action Program for Youth, New York 2006. Available at: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay_guide.pdf

📖 UNDESA, Making Commitments Matter: A toolkit for young people to evaluate National Youth Policy, New York 2004. Available at: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/untoolkit.htm

📖 OHCHR, Handbook on National Human Rights Plans of Action, Professional Series No. 10, 29 August 2002, Available at: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/training10en.pdf

📖 OHCHR, National Plans of Action for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights webpage, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/PlansActions/Pages/PlansofActionIndex.aspx

📖 E. Flynn, From Rhetoric to Action Implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Examples of National Action Plans

📖 WHO MiNDbank: A database of resources covering mental health, substance abuse, disability, general health, human rights and development, https://www.mindbank.info/collection/type/disability_strategies_and_plans/all?page=all

📖 G3ICT compilation of national action plans on disability, http://g3ict.org/design/js/tinymce/filemanager/userfiles/File/National%20and%20Regional%20Strategic%20Plans%20on%20Disability.pdf

📖 African Union Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities 1999 – 2009 (and extended to 2019), http://www.africa-union.org/child/Decade%20Plan%20of%20Action%20-Final.pdf

📖 Malawi Strategic Plan on Disability (2004 - 2007), http://www.fedoma.net/downloads/STRATEGIC-PLAN-2004-2007.pdf

📖 Mali National Action Plan for the African Decade of People with Disability 1999-2009, http://jean.bandiaky.over-blog.net/pages/Decennie_Africaine_des_personnes_handicapees_19992009_Plan_daction_national_du_Mali-899888.html

📖 Rwanda, NCPD Strategic Plan and its Operational Plan for Implementation 2013-2018, https://www.mindbank.info/item/6269

📖 Concept note on the third session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Social Development, available from http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/Concept%20note%20-%20English.pdf

5. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Session Sheet for the Trainer – National Plans on Disability, Session 1

Technical Content 2.B: Guiding Principles for the Development of National Action Plans

Learning Activity 2.B: Participation for Positive Outcomes

Handout: Dialogue Mat on Participation

Session Sheet for the Trainer – National Plans on Disability, Session 2

Technical Content 2.D: Structure and Content of Disability National Action Plans

Learning Activity 2.D: Additional Trainer's Notes

Learning Activity 2.D: Priorities & Commitments

Handout: Phases for the Development of NAPs

Handout: Commitments in NAPs

Session Sheet for the Trainer – National Plans on Disability, Session 1

	Key Messages	See the summary and key learning points.
	Objectives	By the end of this session, participants will have: - Discussed the role National Action Plans can play in advancing implementation of the CRPD and realizing inclusive development. - eflected on the general principles applicable to the development and implementation of disability-inclusive NAPs.
	Room Arrangement	Tables for small group work with 4-6 people.
	Activity	40 mins – Presentation and input on the purpose of NAPs and an overview of their guiding principles. 30 mins – Group work: Participation for Positive Outcomes 20 mins – Plenary feedback and summary discussion
	Duration	90 minutes
	Notes for a Training Team	When distributing the Dialogue Mat, make sure that one participant per group is seated in front of each question – encourage participants to write their answers directly on the sheet. For best results, replicate the Dialogue Mat on larger (flipchart) paper Ensure that any gaps in the learning or any questions are answered during plenary discussion and summary.
	Task Sheets	Learning Activity 2.B: Participation for Positive Outcomes (Dialogue Mat)
	Handouts	N/A

Learning Activity 2.B: Dialogue Mat: Participation for Positive Outcomes

1

What is the purpose of a national disability action plan?

2

Why should persons with disabilities play a role in developing a national disability action plan?

3

How would you identify and select a disability advocate to participate actively in the development and implementation of your plan? What skills and competencies are you looking for?

4

What can persons with disabilities do if they are not being included in decision-making processes?

Session Sheet for the Trainer – Disability National Action Plans, Session 2

🔑	**Key Messages**	See the summary and key learning points.
◎	**Objectives**	By the end of this session, participants will have identified the steps for the preparation, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national action plans.
⚙	**Room Arrangement**	Tables for small group work with 4-6 people.
👆	**Activity**	30 mins – Presentation and input on the phases for the development and implementation of NAPS and their components. 30 mins – Group work: Priorities & Commitments 15 mins – Feedback from groups 15 mins – Summary discussion
⏱	**Duration**	90 minutes
✍	**Notes for a Training Team**	Start by providing participants with an introduction to the components of Disability National Action Plans so they have an introductory understanding of the structure and content. The activity can be run in two ways, please see the additional notes for the training team below. *Be sure to let participants know ahead of time which way you intend to end the activity so that they are prepared for debate or feedback.*
📊	**Task Sheets**	Learning Activity 2.D.: Priorities & Commitments
📄	**Handouts**	Additional Trainer's Notes Handout: Phases for the Development of NAPs Handout: Commitments in NAPs

Learning Activity 2.D: Additional Trainer's Notes

To start this learning activity, divide the participants into stakeholder groups; this will depend on the number of participants in the room, but there should be one set of:

► National government officials

► Provincial, municipal, and local government officials

► Elected representatives

► DPOs and civil society organizations

► International, regional and sub-regional organizations.

Next, distribute to each group the handout with the phases for the development and implementation of a NAP, as well as the Learning Activity description. They will have to decide, in their stakeholder groups, to which actions and commitments they believe they can and wish to contribute. Make sure they are clear about their priorities.

After this initial group work, you can close the session in one of two ways depending on your time allowance:

1. Group Action Planning (if you have time)

In this option, each stakeholder group will come back to a plenary meeting and together the participants will decide an action plan for the development of one NAP. Ask them to answer these three questions:

1. Who will be in charge of what?

2. What do they believe is a priority?

3. What do they think is less of a priority?

Whether or not they come to an agreement or conclusion, the summary discussion can focus on the following two questions:

1. Who had a voice in the conversation and who didn't?

2. Who, at the table, has different priorities?

3. Did anyone raise issues related to women or other people with disabilities from traditionally marginalised groups?

You can conclude the summary conversation by asking: What's the way forward?

2. Stakeholder Feedback (if you have less time)

If you have less time, you can skip over the plenary roundtable debate and simply take feedback from each group.

Your summary conversation can focus on the following questions:

1. Who has different priorities?

2. Did anyone raise issues relating to women or other people with disabilities from traditionally marginalised groups?

3. Which stakeholders can be called upon at each stage in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Disability National Action Plan?

Learning Activity 2.D: Priorities & Commitments

Objective: To identify the steps for the preparation, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of National Action Plans.

In your group you have been assigned the role of a stakeholder group. From this stakeholder's perspective, take a look at the actions for each phase of the development of a NAP and the commitments and priorities that a NAP can include. Answer the following questions:

1. What are your stakeholder group's priorities?

2. To what actions would you be able to contribute your time and services?

3. Which commitments would you lead on? Remember that the list on your handout is only a preliminary list, and if you identify other commitments and priorities, please add them.

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You have 30 minutes to complete this activity in your groups. Be prepared to present or defend your decisions to the other groups.

Handout: Phases for the Development of NAPs	
Phase	**Action**
Preparatory Phase	Define the lead institution for the planning process Consult within government Consult with NGOs and other interested groups Appoint focal points (as per CRPD provision) Develop draft principles Government endorsement Public announcement Organize initial meeting with interested groups
Developmental Phase	Undertake sex-disaggregated data collection exercise Convene frequent meetings of coordinating committee Assessment exercise Conceptualize plan Establish secretariat Establish sectoral working groups Consult with NGOs and other interested groups Public meetings and public hearings Prepare baseline study Identify priorities, issues for special focus, needs of vulnerable groups Establish links with other national planning activities Draft plan Consider time frames Consider legal status
Implementation Phase	Launch plan Hold regular meetings of coordinating committee Work with implementing partners Action by implementing agencies and partners Consultation and networking Launch media and dissemination strategy Raise awareness of disability inclusion in implementation Confirm legal status – e.g. endorsement by Parliament
Monitoring Phase	Appoint a steering committee including DPOs Develop agreed reporting formats Conduct semi-annual assessments by coordinating committee Input by civil society Consultation and networking Feedback to implementing agencies Reports to parliament and general public
Evaluation Phase	Consider annual reports Appoint review panel Reports to parliament and general public Recommendations for successor plan

Handout: Commitments in NAPs

▶ Commitment to international and national disability law frameworks.

▶ Commitment to take legislative and administrative measures to entrench the recognition and observance of the rights of persons with disabilities, including in relation to economic, social and cultural rights.

▶ Commitment to fund a National Action Plan on Disability.

▶ Commitment to protect the civil and political rights of persons with disabilities.

▶ Commitment regarding inclusive development and group rights.

▶ Commitment regarding national institutions.

▶ Commitment regarding capacity development.

▶ Commitment to disability rights awareness-raising.

▶ Commitment to civil society participation.

▶ Commitment to international action.