

Check list of considerations and challenges for promoting access by persons with disabilities

Considerations for access by the disabled

- The existing legal framework should be reviewed for potentially discriminating regulations. Efforts should be made to determine how such regulations can potentially be defused or eliminated.
- Disability access should be mainstreamed into the electoral process as much as feasible, including in areas such as voter and civic education.
- Electoral authorities may need assistance in identifying specific strategies to enfranchise voters with disabilities.
- There may be opportunities to partner with and engage organizations involved in advocacy for the disabled to seek their inputs on different areas of the electoral process.
- The needs of the disabled should be considered in the process of selection of polling places.
- Guidelines for officials at polling places should include instructions on how to extend special help to elderly, hospitalized and disabled voters.
- If feasible, efforts may be made to provide tactile ballot paper templates so the blind can vote in secret. In addition, consideration could be given to providing training or voter education materials in Braille or through deaf signers.
- Efforts to develop the capacity of disabled people's organizations may be supported to strengthen demands for inclusion in the development of government and political party policies.

Challenges to access by the disabled

- In some societies there is often a low priority given to, or awareness of, disabled persons.
- Similarly, there is often a shortage of resources for initiatives to enhance the rights of disabled persons or for organizations undertaking advocacy specifically for this disadvantaged group.
- The segregation of the disabled needs into programs or activities not mainstreamed in the overall project might mean that such activities have a limited impact.

- ❑ Disabled people's organizations often operate in competitive environments due to limited resources and skills; efforts should be made to develop collaboration among these bodies.