

## Background

World over, 'Persons with Disabilities' (PwDs) face numerous instances of exclusion, not only because of their impairments, but also from the family, society, equality in education, employment and access to basic services. Such exclusion and discrimination prevails due to various barriers mainly attitudinal and environmental.

Halfway to the year by which Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are to be achieved (by 2015), PwDs remain conspicuously ignored from programming and discourses on achievement of the goals.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) came into force on May 03, 2008. The Convention marks a "paradigm shift" in attitudes and approaches to PwDs. It takes the movement to a new height – from viewing PwDs as "objects" of charity, medical treatment and social protection to viewing PwDs as "subjects" with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives, based on their free and informed consent, as well as being active members of the society.

The UNCRPD also provides an opportunity for human rights and development actors to actively

George Cheriyan, Head CUTS CART Speaking at Launch Meeting, September 2010



combine and integrate the paradigm shift, so that new and innovative thinking and collaboration could be utilised to bring maximum benefit to PwDs and the society.

Despite India having entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century with various programmes for addressing the needs of the socially excluded vulnerable groups, PwDs remain far away from the mainstream of development. This is on account of various factors such as lack of their united voice, exact data, political will, bureaucratic apathy, lack of clear cut policies and guidelines, public attitude and charity approach.

The World Bank estimates the prevalence of disability between two to eight percent. The census of India in the year 2001 states that 2.5 percent of population of Rajasthan has some form of disability, the number being more among males (2.86 percent). This data is higher than the national average of 2.13 percent. According to conservative estimates, approximately six percent of India's population is disabled.

The key strategy for the PwDs is to empower and mainstream them by securing their entitlements, services and by improving livelihood opportunities and quality of life.

Abraham George, Regional Director, Sightsavers Speaking at Sensitisation Workshop with GRAVIS, Jodhpur, November 2010



## About the Project

Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS), in partnership with Sightsavers, has initiated a project, entitled 'Mainstreaming Disability in Rajasthan'. CUTS intends to sensitise and build the capacity of select developmental agencies – Sightsavers partner organisations, schools of social work, law colleges and state officials to develop human capital for promoting inclusion of disabled people in the policy planning and decision-making process; and enabling them to access their rights and entitlements to a life of dignity.

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen civil society participation in designing and implementation of programmes for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in order to increase their effective participation in mainstream development processes.

## Objectives

- To sensitise and build the capacity of leading NGOs, including Sightsavers partners located in Rajasthan, to facilitate the inclusion of disability as a programming dimension and inclusion of PwDs in the decision making process; and

Aditi Mehta, Principal Secretary, SJ&E Department & Prasanna Pincha, Special Rapporteur, NHRC at State Level Consultation, December 2010



- To inform, engage and sensitise budding professionals of the development sector, law and the media on ways to portray positively PwDs in social life and development

### Project Activities

- 26 one-day sensitisation workshops would be conducted with major inter governmental organisations, NGOs, Sightsavers partners and key government departmental heads in Rajasthan
- Resource pack development
- Brochures, posters and other information, education and communication materials on disability
- Access audit of 10 buildings of various organisations and government bodies; and
- Celebration of important days pertaining to disability such as World Disabled Day, White Cane Day, etc.

### Expected Outcomes

- Sensitisation of organisations and departments to the need of including PwDs in the policy planning and the decision making process
- Development of HR policies and inclusion of PwDs as part of their work force
- Inclusion of PwDs in all aspects of programming in the identified organisations and departments



ToT on access audit of buildings, Jaipur November 2010



[www.cuts-international.org/cart](http://www.cuts-international.org/cart)

25 years  
1963 2008  
CUTS International



# Mainstreaming Disability in Rajasthan



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