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Subregional Conference



Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in South Asia: Reflections and Way Forward for ADB

ADB

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Session # 2 Old Age and Disability in South Asia—Issues and Responses

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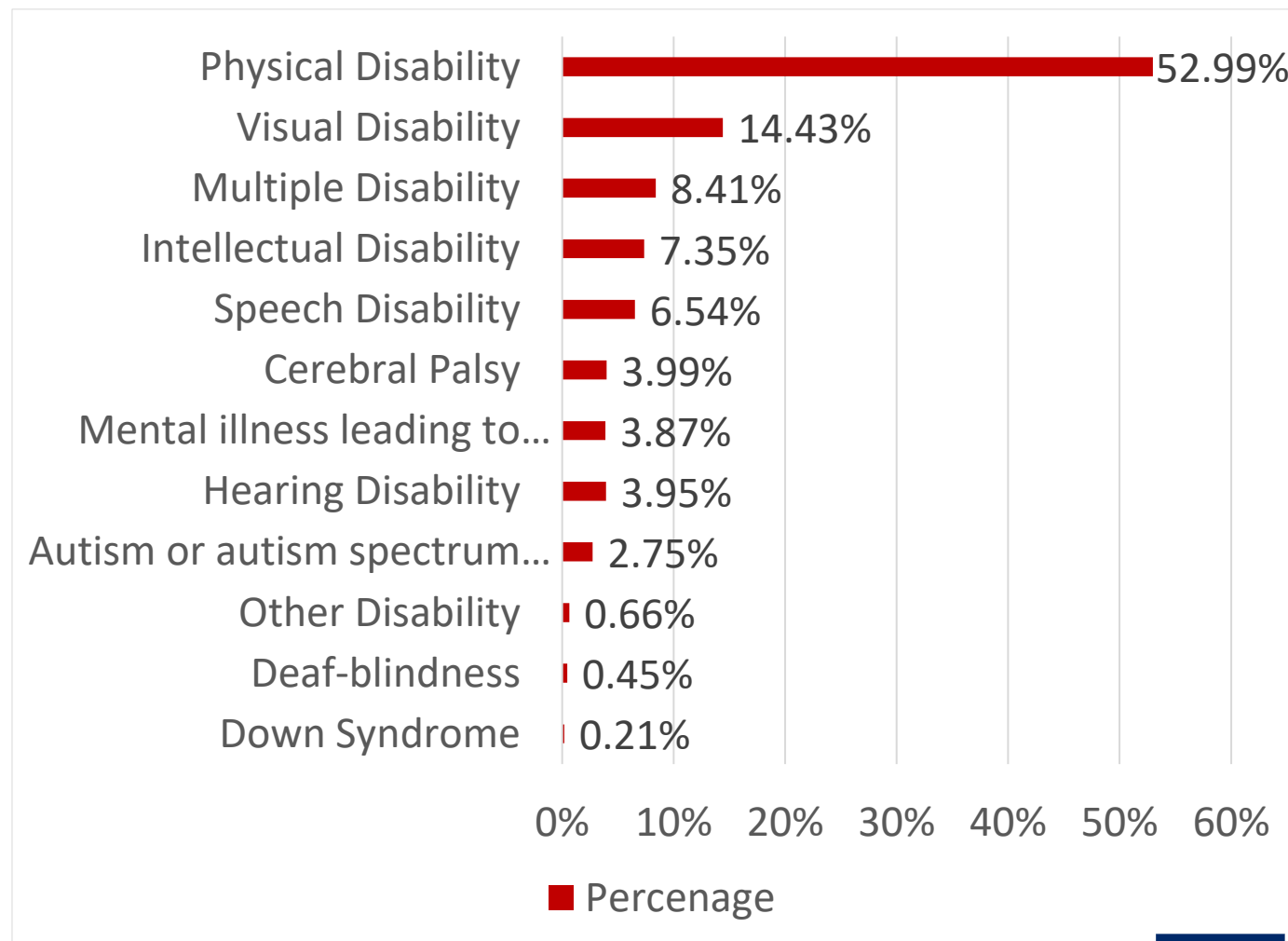
Topic: Government initiatives on disability issues

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Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh



% of People with Disabilities in Bangladesh

- The total number of registered persons with disabilities up to 30th September 2022 is 2.94 million.
- Among them 61.14% are male, 38.77% are female and 0.1% are third gender.
- The graph is showing percentage of persons with disabilities by disability type in the database.



Legal Frameworks

The Bangladesh Government has created enabling environment for persons with disabilities.

Some of the legal instruments include:

- Rights and Protection for the Persons with Disability Act 2013
- Neuro-Developmental Disabilities Protection Trust Act, 2013
- Rights and Protection for the Persons with Disability Rules, 2015
- Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Protection Trust Rules, 2015
- Mental Health Act 2018
- National Action Plan for the disabled persons 2019
- Strategic Action Plan for Neuro-developmental Disorders (2016-2021) extended up to 2030)



Statutory Bodies, Action Plan

Government has established

- Neuro-Developmental Disability Protection Trust in 2014
- Bangladesh Rehabilitation Council in 2019

Two long-term Plan of Action(National Action Plan for the disabled persons 2019 and Strategic Action Plan for Neuro-developmental Disorders) are under implementation which have been developed through wide stakeholder consultation involving also the persons with disabilities. The **Ministry of Social Welfare and Health Services Division** are monitoring the implementation of the Action Plans.



Database

The Government of Bangladesh is conducting a Disability Detection Survey Programme to get accurate statistics for persons with disabilities through a software (www.dis.gov.bd) entitled “Disability Information System”.

The purpose of this ongoing program is to

- facilitate targeted strategies
- ensure the welfare of persons with disabilities in accordance with the National Policy on Disability.

The Government has approved the policy on use of data in 2021 to enable various stakeholders to use the information obtained through this programme.



Awareness Raising

As a part of National Action Plan implementation , awareness raising activities are implemented.

National and International Days observation like International Disability Day, World Autism Awareness Day, World Cerebral Palsy Day, World White Cane Day, International Sign Language Day, Down Syndrome Day etc.

Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television is broadcasting magazines, songs, slogan, jingle and discussion programmes on disability awareness.

Different Ministries like Ministry of Education and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, are raising awareness on all types of disabilities through workshops and electronic media for positive attitude towards persons with disabilities.



Programs: Allowance, Health, Education

Government has various schemes:

The Indigent Disability Allowance Program-The number of beneficiaries has been increased from 0.26 million in 2009-10 to 2.36 million in 2022-23 and the budget has been increased from BDT 93.6 million to BDT 24.29 billion.

Free health/therapeutic services through 103 Integrated Disability Service Centers ; 40 Mobile Therapy Vans, Institute of Pediatric Neuro-disorder& Autism, autism resource centre etc.

Rehabilitation Centres for children with visually impaired, speech and hearing & Mental disability etc.



Education

Education programs

- **Education Stipend Programme for the Student with Disabilities**
- **Integrated visually impaired education Program**
- **Schools for the visually impaired**
- **Training and rehabilitation center for the visually impaired**
- **Training and rehabilitation centre for the physically handicapped, Tongi, Gazipur**
- **National Special Education Centre**



Accessibility

The Government has taken initiatives to make 25,000 government websites accessible. There is an open-source Bangla “Text To Speech (TTS)” which was developed locally.



Steps have been taken by Government to ensure Accessibility by following universal accessibility guideline in Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC), 2020 and steps have been taken for ensuring ramps, disability friendly bus, accessible toilets and drinking water facilities, along with assistive devices.



Women empowerment

- Government of Bangladesh has taken initiatives to ensure human rights of women with disability.
- Rehabilitation activities of burnt and persons with disabilities are being implemented.
- The borrowers repay the loan amount in installments and deposit the team savings in their respective village savings funds. These activities are more popular among the poor people of the village than the high-interest loans of NGOs.
- A hostel for workers Women with Disability being run by the Jatiyo Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation (National Disability Development Foundation).



Challenges

- Inter Ministerial co-ordination
- Inadequate rehabilitation professionals
- Lack of adequate budget and human resource in spite of strong political commitment
- Periodic transfer of respective officials which effects the consistency of programmes.



Collaboration

- Capacity building for workforce who are working in the field level like USSO, USW, PSOSKS workforce.
- Programmes for women with disabilities
- Upgradation and modernisation of vocational training institutes and centres
- Database of receivers of training like SEIP Project
- Establishment of community based vocational training institutes
- Inclusive education and modernisation of different government schools for persons with disabilities



Health

