

Clarification needed: *Inclusive, Disability Responsive or CRPD compliant budgeting?*

May 2019

In recent years, as many countries have adopted new legislation to implement the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), interest has been growing on the role of public budget in supporting the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The terms inclusive budgeting, disability and disability responsive budgeting, CRPD compliant budgeting are somehow used interchangeably, but can mean different things. To disentangle them, three basic questions are important, all of which are preconditions for inclusive budgeting.

Fundamental Budgeting Questions

- Are sufficient public funds being spent to realize rights of all persons with disabilities?
- Are the public funds being collected and spent in a way that always promotes inclusion and gender equality?
- Are budget and procurement processes, among others, fully inclusive?

Inclusive budgeting entails that government revenue generation and expenditures involve and benefit all people in their diversity. It includes persons with disabilities among others and pays attention to the impact of revenue generation and expenditures on gender equality and the most marginalized groups. It ensures that all stakeholders are meaningfully consulted in budget processes. Important as an overarching concept, such a broad approach alone might miss the specific requirements of different groups, particularly the most marginalized among persons with disabilities. The answers may be YES to the three fundamental questions, but there is no guarantee.

Disability budgeting and disability responsive budgeting concepts are an echo of gender-responsive and child responsive budgeting, with a focus on persons with disabilities. Such approach might be more inclusive of all groups but still, may not be specific enough. Indeed governments, in good faith might consider as disability responsive, public expenditures on programs that are:

- important but which do not promote inclusion of persons with disabilities per se, such as public health programs (immunization, mine risk awareness...)
- in contradiction with the CRPD standards, such as segregated education or psychiatric hospitals practicing forced treatment and coercion.
- disability specific and fail to promote a whole of government approach.

While they offer an entry point for stakeholders to engage with budget processes and public financial management (PFM), inclusive or disability responsive budgeting might not provide the comprehensive guidance required to ensure that maximum available resources are used to implement the CRPD.

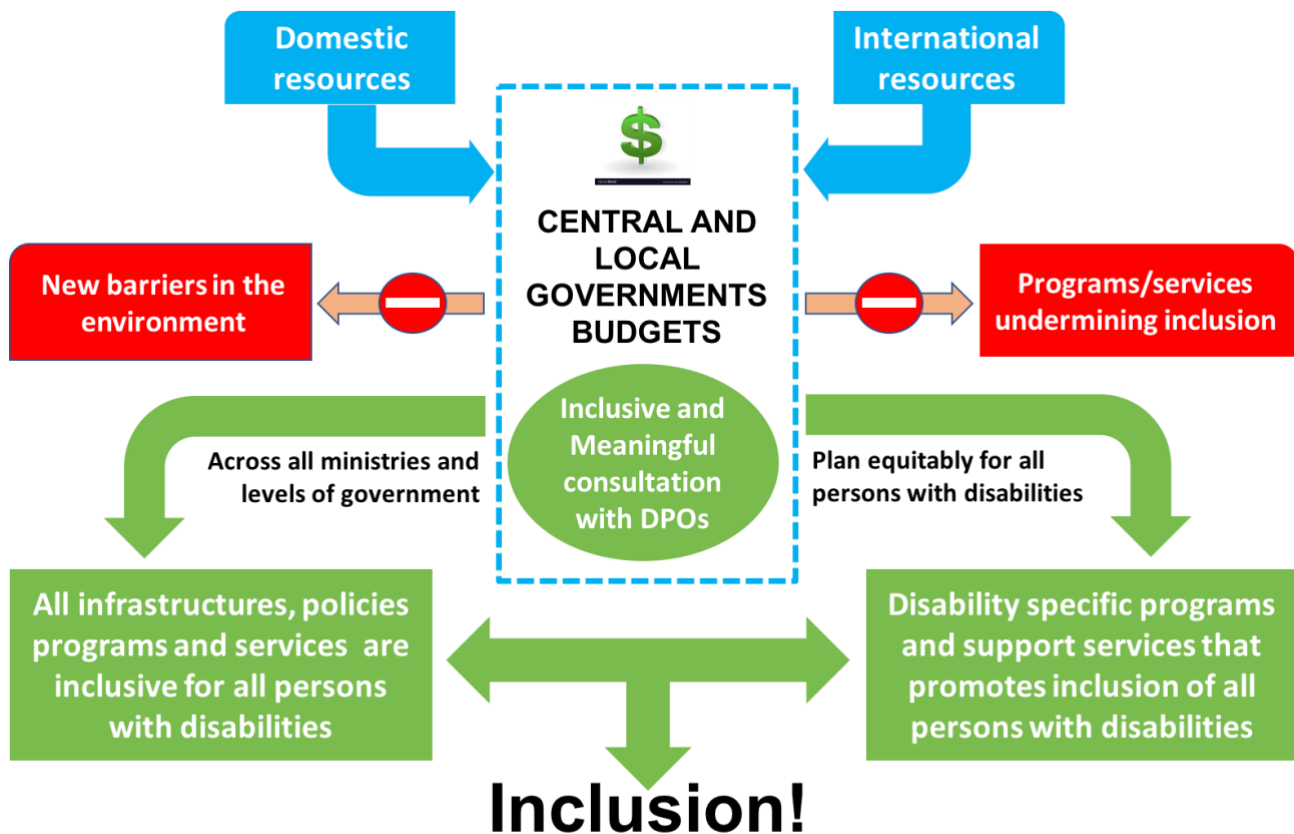


Figure 1 Basic principles of budgeting for inclusion of persons with disabilities (CIP, 2019)

CRPD compliant budgeting addresses all three questions, by building on the comprehensive standards of the CRPD to assess and plan public resource generation and allocation. It contributes to inclusive budgeting which encompass broader groups and issues. While the CRPD Committee has not yet developed specific guidance on the subject, few basic elements can be elaborated based on the CRPD Standards and the experience of DPOs from Philippines, India and the Pacific on budget analysis and advocacy:

- The planning process and execution of public budgets strictly comply with provisions of the CRPD, in *close consultation with representative organizations of all persons with disabilities*, including women and children with disabilities, and with specific attention to the most marginalized groups.
- The *overall public finance management system* contributes efficiently and effectively to CRPD implementation, using all available instruments (transfers, public procurement, grants, contracts, tax expenditures, revenue generation, etc.).
- Across sectors, *all central and local public spending*, as well as development assistance funds, foster accessibility and non-discrimination across sectors and contribute to the inclusion of persons with disabilities
- All policies, guidelines or administrative regulations allowing for and related to public expenditures, are consistent with the CRPD, including public procurement regulations.
- Public resources, domestic and international, do not finance programs and services that are in contradiction with the CRPD standards:
 - Any non-compliant programs are reformed in line with the CRPD or their resources are reallocated towards CRPD compliant policies, services, and programs. This may be realized progressively but a deadline should be set. This applies to all

services that are fully or partially funded and/or regulated by public authorities, including those delivered by private entities.

- Public resources are used to:
 - Sustain and ensure universal access to national policies, programs, and services compliant with the CRPD.
 - Scale up effective local programs and initiatives compliant with the CRPD.
 - Invest in social innovation addressing gaps in required services for inclusion.
- Particular attention is given to *gender equality, children with disabilities and the inclusion of most marginalized groups*.
- *All ministries, public agencies and local governments* allocate resources to ensure non-discrimination and to progressively make their services accessible and inclusive to all persons with disabilities. Earmarking may be considered and should be supported by plans and technical assistance.
- *Public resources follow responsibilities devolved from central to local governments* within the frame of fiscal decentralization to ensure that local authorities have the means to deliver the services and support for which they have been mandated.
- *Revenue generation, including taxation*, is gender sensitive, takes into consideration the extra costs faced by persons with disabilities and increases fiscal space for inclusion.
- *The principle of non-retrogression* is fully applied and prevents disproportionate and arbitrary cuts in resources allocated for the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- *Budgeting processes and reports are transparent*, with agreed upon indicators for monitoring the progress of CRPD compliant budgeting, including not only budgetary allocation but actual expenditures as well.

While all countries have to significantly improve the way non-discrimination and accessibility requirements apply to all public spending, resourcing inclusion of persons with disabilities will vary according to context.

Many higher income countries already have substantial budget allocation on disability, such as EU countries, spending in average at least 2.1% of GDP¹ (albeit not always sufficient to meet all their obligations and subject in recent years to damaging austerity policies). This implies first reallocation of some expenditures towards CRPD-compliant policies, such as inclusive education, deinstitutionalization and the development of community-based services.

Most Low and Middle-Income Countries have been spending very little for inclusion of persons with disabilities (often below 0.5% of GDP), therefore implementing the CRPD and inclusive SDGs will imply significant increase of budget allocations across sectors. They will often also have to reform the few existing programs towards inclusion and CRPD compliance.

DPOs, national and local governments, together with donors, have to develop a common understanding of the CRPD standards, make the most of the available data and identify together the existing gaps and priorities, to allocate resources effectively and equitably. More research and development of technical capacities are required to support these emerging national processes.

The Centre for Inclusive Policy has been working with the Pacific Disability Forum (Fiji), Equals-Centre for Promotion of Social Justice (India) and the Europe foundation (Georgia) on initiatives for CRPD compliant budget advocacy and is currently developing related training modules with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, among others. For more information www.inclusive-policy.org, alex.cote@inclusive-policy.org and CIP discussion paper #1 "[Why progress on inclusion demands action on budget](#)" developed with Polly Meeks.

¹ ANED, (2017) Adequate standard of living and social protection (Article 28 of UN CRPD) Statistical Indicators