

Promoting an inclusive society

Dark & Light's Theory of change

1. Introduction

Persons with a disability in developing countries often face discrimination and stigma. They are more often excluded from education, employment, health services and other government and NGO services. This leads to a further decline in income opportunities, resulting in further exclusion and eventually leading to chronic poverty.¹

This document describes the vision of Dark & Light for an inclusive society and the overall strategy we follow to bring change for persons with a disability. It can be seen as an overall strategy which brings together the different policy papers of Dark & Light describing our methods and approaches for the different sectors we are working in.

We follow the principles and objectives for inclusion as described in the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with a Disability. The convention can be seen as the broad framework for Dark & Light operations. It describes the principles for an inclusive society and the rights of persons with a disability to education, to health care, to employment to information and in general to actively participate in society and benefit from government services on an equal basis. For a more indepth description of Dark & Light vision on the rights based approach we refer to the D&L Rights based approach policy paper.

This convention also describes the right to health care. In this sector Dark & Light focuses on prevention of blindness. A more specific framework – within this broad framework of the above mentioned convention - is the Vision 2020 plan describing the right to eye care and the objectives to improve vision worldwide.

To help persons with a disability to improve their situation and to claim their rights, we have to look at the attitude of society (including government, civil society organisations as well as local communities) towards this group and the unbalanced power relations. Interventions in this area do not call for quick one-size-fits-all solutions.

Changes of attitudes in society are long term processes that can only be partially influenced by Dark & Light and partners. We are part of multi-stakeholder processes. An approach at different levels using different methods is needed: showing role models, initiating discussion on the rights of persons with special needs, supporting example projects, influencing colleague organisations, building the capacity of governments, etc.

2. Vision of success

Our principles:

- All people have the right to fully participate in society
- We recognise the dignity of every person
- We value the capacities of every individual

Ultimate goal

- All persons with a visual impairment and persons with other disabilities have the same opportunities as anyone else to actively participate in society.

Our scope: we support civil society organisations in a selection of countries¹ in Asia and Africa, where the problems are most pressing and we can make a difference through our network of partner organisations.

The actors that can influence our vision of success and their ideal contribution to this success are:

Political parties	Political parties in parliament and councils adapt laws for improvement of the situation of persons with disabilities.
Government institutes (national, local)	Government gives access to persons with a disability to all services provided. To mention just a few: access to education, health care, social welfare. Policies and plans take into account the special needs of this group.
Civil society organisations	Civil society organisations take into account the rights of persons with a disability in their lobby and service provision (community development, education, food security, etc)
Religious institutes	Churches and other religious institutes spread the message of righteousness and the value of every human being, including persons with a disability. Their activities and services are accessible to persons with a disability.
Media	Media publish about the situation of persons with a disability and promote an inclusive society in their messages.
Businesses	Private companies give employment to persons with a disability. They provide barrier-free services.
Parents	Parents of children with a disability believe in the capacities of their children and understand their rights.
Communities	People in the communities recognise the rights of children and adults with disabilities and include them in all community activities.
Disabled peoples organisations	Persons with a disability understand and are able to claim their rights to equal access and participation in society.
Providers of special (disability) services	Disability NGOs as well as government health institutes provide services – prevention of disability, eye care, rehabilitation, income generation – that are focussed on improving the situation of PWDs and their inclusion in society.
Institutional donors and UN organisations	Institutional donors and UN organisations have taken into account the rights of persons with a disability in their policies, programs and financial support.

¹ In 2010 these countries are: Indonesia, Philippines, Nepal, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Ethiopia, Sudan, Tanzania, Nigeria.

3. Preconditions for success

Short term and intermediate changes that need to take place for each actor to contribute effectively are:

Political parties	Members of parliament and (district or municipality) councils understand the rights of persons with a disability and are willing to actively promote an improvement of their position in society. Persons with a disability are represented in parliament and other policy making bodies
Government institutes (national, local)	Government employees understand the rights of persons with a disability. Ministries are adapting policies for inclusive education, improved access to health care and other services. Government institutes take into account the special needs of persons with disabilities. Physical obstacles and other barriers (to information, attitudes of staff) are removed.
Civil society organisations	Management and staff of civil society organisations understand the rights of persons with disabilities. NGOs, lobby platforms, CBOs are willing to give full access to their services. They collaborate with providers of special (disability) services for referral and quality improvement. Physical obstacles and other barriers (to information, attitudes of staff) to their services are removed. Their policies and program plans take into account the special needs of PWDs.
Religious institutes	Religious institutes understand the situation of persons with a disability and are committed to make their members aware of the value of persons with a disability in the eyes of God. They take measures to increase the accessibility of their activities.
Media	Different media, such as television, radio, new papers are aware of the situation of persons with a disability. They are committed to give attention to the situation and the rights of PWDs in their programs and papers.
Businesses	Private companies understand that persons with disabilities have capacities that could contribute to their mission and activities. The attitude of management is positive toward employing persons with disabilities as well as regarding them as respected clients. They remove obstacles to employment. They increase the accessibility of their information and services.
Parents	Parents of children are informed about the possibilities for children with disabilities to get education and have seen good examples of

	inclusion.
Communities	People in the communities have been made aware of the rights of persons with disabilities and their capacities to contribute to society. Leaders express the need to give equal access to community activities.
Disabled peoples organisations	Persons with a disability have formed associations (DPOs) and understand their rights to participate in society. They have learnt how make society aware of their rights and how to lobby the government for access of services.
Providers of special (disability services)	Organisations focussed on persons with a disability understand the rights based approach. They incorporate the rights of PWDs in their activities.
Institutional donors and UN organisations	Institutional donors and UN organisations are aware of (inter)national legislation. They have analysed the situation of PWDs in their countries of operation and have analysed their policies and have adapted them to make them more inclusive.

4. System mapping

Who can make a difference in making the required change (personal, relationship, institutional or cultural) happen:

We distinguish:

- Positive influence, same objective
- Positive influence, different objective
- Weak influence, but potential
- Negative influence, how to persuade or neutralize

Stakeholder				Description
Political parties		■		Positive influence, different objective (disability is only a minor topic for them). But could be promoters of policy and regulations that stimulate inclusion.
Government institutes (national, local)		■	■	Sometimes negative influence (prejudice against inclusion). Could be positive influence if made aware about the rights of PWDs.
Civil society organisations		■		Positive influence, different objective. Often ignore PWDs. If made aware, could be a positive influence for inclusion.
Religious institutes			■	Weak influence, but potential. Religious leaders could bring the positive message across. Although they have a different objective.
Media		■		Could be positive influence (different objective), although disability will be one of the vary many topics that strive for attention.

Businesses				■	Negative influence, as often corporation do not see PWDs as human capital. If convinced, may become a positive influence for inclusive employment.
Parents	■			■	Sometimes negative influence (no willingness to invest in education of disabled child). Could become a strong promoter for inclusion.
Communities		■		■	Often negative influence. Could turn into positive influence, although with a different objective (survival of community).
Disabled peoples organisations	■				Positive influence, same objective – if they are convinced of the rights based approach. If still believe in charity, then could even be a negative influence.
Providers of special (disability services)	■				Positive influence, same objective – if they are convinced of the rights based approach. If still believe in charity, then could even be a negative influence.
Institutional donors and UN organisations		■			Positive influence, different objective. UN organisations and Institutional donors like EU have adopted the UNCRPD. However, they have different objectives: they will not easily bring across this message to their counterparts (i.e. governments in their countries of operation.)

5. From theory to strategy

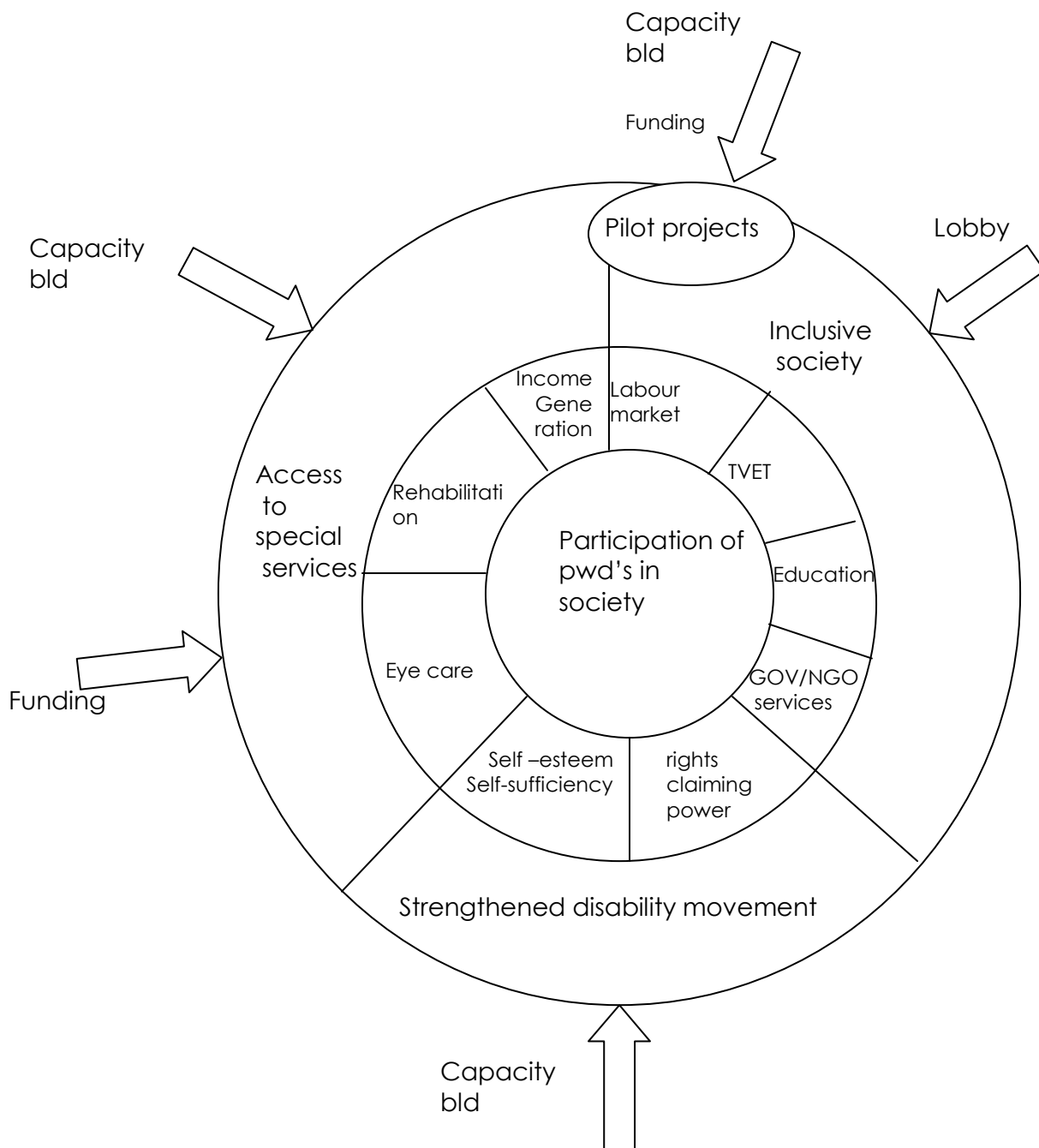
To stimulate the improvement of the situation of persons with a disability and their inclusion in society we follow a triple track approach. See also the picture below.

1. Setting up and improving sustainable (special) services for our target group

- Setting up and improving systems of eye care
 - Setting up and improving (community based) rehabilitation services
- The services specifically focus on our target group. The services are provided with the best possible quality so that people get cured (or have their handicap reduced) or are able to live with their impairment in such a way that they are able to integrate in society (rehabilitation is stimulating inclusion). The services are embedded in government systems and set up in a (institutional and financial) sustainable way.

Our role

- We give financial support to projects that make a difference and can be used as examples to government and other organisations.
- We facilitate strengthening of networks of organisations working on eye care and rehabilitation and inclusion in order to improve good quality services.
- Supporting pilot projects that could serve as a model for inclusion of children and adults with a disability in education, health, livelihood, economic development and other sectors.



- We study the impact of our services and document good practises to improve quality and to stimulate others to take on the same inclusive approach

2. Promoting an inclusive society

- We make the communities aware of the rights and potential of persons with a disability.
- We support lobby to the governments to promote inclusion of persons with a disability in society and access to (government) services.
- We build the capacity of government institutes and development organisations to include persons with a disability in their services.

The interventions are focussed on regular government services and development programs. The aim is to increase the access to these services and participation of our target group.

Our role

- Through networks we support the lobby for the rights of persons with disabilities in the Netherlands and in Europe.
- We support the lobby of partner organisations towards governments and donors in their own countries.
- We support initiatives for raising the awareness on the rights of persons with a disability at national or local level in these countries.
- We train and advise institutes and organisations to make their services accessible for persons with a disability.

3. Empowering persons with a disability

- We stimulate organisations of persons with a disability in self help groups and lobby groups
- We support active participation of persons with a disability in development planning and in implementation.

The intervention is focussed on helping people to group and stay stronger together, to raise their voice, to stand up for their own rights and to show what they are capable of. The aim is that they see themselves and are seen by others as valuable members of society, so that they can contribute and participate.

6. Dark & Light policy papers

Dark & Light's Theory of Change of will form the basis of our policies and strategies. We have already mentioned our policy paper on the Rights based approach, which is an elaboration of what is mentioned in this regard in the Theory of Change.

Our Vision, mission and values form the basis of our work.

These will be updated soon, to incorporate the aim to promote an inclusive society.

It is our mission to support local partners in an equal relationship. This is described in the policy paper Partnership.

In all three approaches, mentioned above, capacity building is key. Our approach towards capacity building is described in the policy paper Capacity building.

Under promoting Inclusive society, we mention the capacity building of governments and NGOs on inclusion of persons with a disability. This approach is described in the policy paper Mainstreaming disability. Themes that are not described in separate policy papers, but are included in the disability mainstreaming approach – because of the broad focus on an inclusive society – are (among others) disaster response and disaster risk reduction.

One of Dark & Light's roles is providing financial support to projects. Our criteria for financial support and the monitoring of projects are laid down in the policy papers Project support and Planning, monitoring and evaluation. The policy paper Sustainability form the basis of our work to make the partners more self-sufficient.

Our approach towards setting up and improving systems of eye care and improving rehabilitation services are described in two separate policy papers.

An area which is linking to setting up sustainable (special) services and promoting an inclusive society is Inclusive education. It is linking to the first approach, where we are setting up projects that can be used as an example for government and other organisations. It is linked to the second approach where we are lobbying the government and building their capacity to make the education system inclusive. We have developed a policy paper describing our methodology. This policy paper will be updated, to enhance the approach for strengthening education systems to make them more inclusive.

A policy paper TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) describes our methodology towards helping persons with a disability to generate their own income (first approach of setting up sustainable services) and to include persons with a disability in general TVET activities (second approach towards an inclusive society). Because of the linkages of TVET with employment and business development this policy paper will be upgraded to a policy paper on employment and income.

Our approach to HIV-Aids is also following a twin-track. This is described in the policy paper HIV-Aids.

Under promoting an inclusive society and empowerment of persons with a disability, lobby and advocacy in an important aspect.

Our dialogue with Institutional donors is described in the policy paper Institutional Donor Strategy.

These methodologies are put into practice in the various programs and projects supported by Dark & Light. Our strategies in the different countries are reflecting the methodologies described in the above mentioned policy papers. The strategies per country are laid down in country policy papers.

ⁱ Yeo,R. and K. Moore. 2003. Including disabled people in poverty reduction work: "Nothing about us, without us", World Development, 31 (3).