

Handout 4

THE GLOBAL TRUTH ABOUT DISABILITY

HOW TO USE THIS HANDOUT

Use this handout with the following activity:

- **Excuses excuses**

INTRODUCTION

Not all disabled people have problems with their health or impairment. But most face poverty, discrimination, prejudice and stigma. Many lack access to public services – health, education, clean water, sanitation and housing. Disabled children and adults are more vulnerable to conflict, HIV and AIDS, violence, abuse and neglect.

More than 600 million of the world's population have impairments, with three-quarters of them living in developing countries. In addition, 1 in 4 of the poorest people have an impairment. If you consider the exclusion and discrimination that disabled people and their families face, the impact of these figures will be even greater.

Here is just a selection of facts and figures that paint the real picture for disabled people across the globe.

POVERTY

- there's a direct link between poverty and disabling impairments
- 50 per cent of impairments are preventable and poverty-related
- 20 per cent of impairments are caused by malnutrition
- more than 80 per cent of disabled people live below the poverty line, in developing countries.

EDUCATION

- 98 per cent of disabled children in developing countries don't attend school
- 40 million of the 115 million children who don't attend school have a disability
- disabled female children are less likely to attend school in comparison with disabled male children
- literacy rates for disabled individuals are as low as three per cent globally, impacting important issues such as communication on HIV and AIDS.



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Sources

- Australian Council For Overseas Aid
- UK Department For International Development
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
- Child Rights Information Network
- Motivation
- World Health Organisation
- United Nations Children's Fund

HEALTH

- only two per cent of disabled people in developing countries have access to basic services and rehabilitation
- 80 per cent could have their needs met in the community; only 20 per cent would require specialist attention
- less than 0.1 per cent of deafblind people in developing countries receive appropriate support
- in countries where under-five mortality has decreased to 20 per cent, mortality rates for disabled children may still be 80 per cent
- more than 80 per cent of the 50 million people affected by epilepsy live in developing countries – treatment costs can be as low as \$5 US per year
- 20 million people who need a wheelchair don't have one.

VIOLENCE

- a study in India found 90 per cent of people with intellectual impairments will experience sexual abuse, often in childhood
- disabled children are more likely to experience violence from birth
- disabled children are targeted by sexual predators and can be subject to abuse and maltreatment at school.

CONFLICT/WAR

- for every child killed in armed conflict, three are injured and permanently disabled
- 40 per cent of 26,000 persons killed and injured by landmines every year are children
- more than ten million children are psychologically traumatised by armed conflicts.

