Inclusive Budgeting
Tip Sheet

This tip sheet outlines recommendations to design budgets that are inclusive and accountable to persons with disabilities. The recommendations are based on available resources (referenced when used) and practice; however, more evidence is required to improve the way budget become more inclusive. Recommendations include:

- What is inclusive budgeting;
- Budgeting for accessibility and reasonable accommodation;
- Budgeting for specialized non-food items and assistive devices.

Before looking at budget lines, it is important to have a good understanding of basic definitions, principles and approaches to inclusion of persons with disabilities.

What is inclusive budgeting?

Inclusive budgeting is when costs to address barriers, promote participation, and provide targeted activities for persons with disabilities are incorporated into the budget during planning.[1]

What can be factored in inclusive budgeting?

Inclusive budgeting factors in costs for:

- physical accessibility;
- accessible communications;
- reasonable accommodations;
- specialized non-food items (NFIs);
- assistive devices and mobility equipment.

What is accessibility?

Accessibility is one of the eight principles under which all rights in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities should be interpreted, and is the right that persons with disabilities have to "*access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.*"[2] Accessibility is a **precondition** to the inclusion of all persons with disabilities.

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[1] Adapted from the IASC Guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action – final draft. See https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-team-inclusion-persons-disabilities-humanitarian-action

[1] CRPD, art. 9.

[2] CRPD, art. 9.

What is reasonable accommodation?

Reasonable accommodation means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.[3]

How are accessibility and reasonable accommodation different?

Both strategies aim to guarantee equal access and avoid discriminatory situations, however, they are different in the way they apply. Accessibility applies without regard to the need of a particular person with a disability, for example, to have access to a building, a service or a product, on an equal basis with others, following Universal Design principles.

> **Universal design** is an approach to increasing accessibility and means "the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be **usable by all people**, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design."[4] The principles of universal design, when applied in accessibility, facilitate access to a larger population, including persons with disabilities.[5]

Therefore, **accessibility** *comes first*. Reasonable accommodation must be provided *from the moment* that a person with a disability requires access to non-accessible situations or environments, or wants to exercise his or her rights. Therefore, reasonable accommodation is provided *ad hoc*, and even if accessibility was factored. The table below provides more information on how accessibility and reasonable accommodation are different:

Bridging the gap between accessibility and individual adjustments	
Accessibility	**Reasonable accommodation**
Can be implemented in time	Has to be provided immediately, otherwise there is discrimination
Is a general solution	Is an individual solution
Applies regardless of the need of persons with disabilities to access infrastructures, services or information	Applies from the moment that a person requires access to a non-accessible situation
Is guided by general principles of universal design	Is tailored to the person and designed together with the person concerned
Is ruled by accessibility standards	Is ruled by a proportionality test: is not relevant, available or affordable by the project

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[3] CRPD, Art 2

[4] CRPD, art. 2.

[5] http://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/The-7-Principles/

Can you give an example of accessibility and reasonable accommodation?

Accessibility and reasonable accommodation are not exclusive of each other; actually these are strategies that should be combined to guarantee access, as in the following example:

- A woman with a physical disability requires accessing a building where IRC services are provided. She does not find any barrier to enter to the building (e.g. there are on steps, or there is a ramp), circulate through the building (there are elevators, or services are in the first floor, doors are wide, handles easy to open) and use all facilities and services (information is displayed at a level where it can be read, video announcements have subtitles, leaflets are easy to read, toilets are accessible) without requiring any support. This is an example of **accessibility**, as the building has been used following universal design principles: parents with their children, older people or pregnant women will as well benefit from this accessible environment that welcomes all.
- A second woman with a physical disability comes to the same building to attend to a consultation, but finds it difficult to circulate through all facilities, and requires that a support person is coming with her to open doors or provide support to use the toilets. Allowing for the costs of that support person is providing a **reasonable accommodation**.
- An outreach team refers a girl with an intellectual disability to come to the same service; the costs for a family member to come with her are covered; this is providing **reasonable accommodation**.
- The IRC organizes a consultation in this building, and a participant who is deaf is invited to participate. The IRC covers the costs of a sign language interpreter for her; this is providing **reasonable accommodation** for participation.
- If the building above was not accessible at all, we could **retro-fit accessibility** (if there is time and resources for it, as it tends to be more expensive), or provide **reasonable accommodation measures**: having a transportable ramp, providing services in out-reach capacity or other facility (e.g. a tent outside).
- **Remember**! All reasonable accommodation measure should be dignified! (e.g. avoid segregating measures: do not open a "tent for persons with disabilities" only)

As you see in the examples above, even in accessible infrastructures and having accessible communications, reasonable accommodation can be provided to ensure access for all.

How we can budget for accessibility and reasonable accommodation?

There is not enough evidence on budgeting both for accessibility and reasonable accommodation in humanitarian action. You can add lumpsums or percentages (some of them suggested above), include costs within other activities or in separate rows… and share with us what you have done and how it work! However, some of the following recommendations can be considered:

- Accessibility should be **planned in advance**, and can be implemented in time.
  - Standards recommend that to provide for **physical accessibility** (e.g., in the construction of buildings and WASH facilities) an additional 0.5-1 per cent should be budgeted.[6]
  - Retrofitting is more expensive! For example, the cost of making a school latrine accessible is less than 3% of the overall costs of the latrine, and can be less than 1% if planned from the outset.[7]

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[6] See *Humanitarian inclusion standards for older people and people with disabilities*.
[7] UNICEF (2017) *Including children with disabilities in humanitarian action – Education booklet.*

- Beyond physical accessibility, include in the budget the cost of **accessible communications**: e.g. publication and dissemination of messages in diverse formats and media accessible to persons with disabilities – subtitles in video announcements, developing information in easy-read/plain language formats, etc.
- In addition to accessibility, you can keep a **flexible budget line** to provide for reasonable accommodations. **Reasonable accommodation** is an individual measure that benefits a given person; nevertheless, it can have **collective benefits**:
  - Individual benefits: covering costs for personal assistants or sign language interpreters, covering costs for accessible transportation,
  - Collective benefits: covering costs for a transportable/temporary ramp can benefit many, providing outreach services if a person with a disability cannot access center-based interventions, etc.
- Because denying reasonable accommodation is discrimination, individual solutions **must be** delivered on demand.

What other costs can be factored in inclusive budgets?

Inclusive budget can as well considered specialized non-food items and assistive devices.

Specialized non-food items include adult sized diapers or other products for incontinence, adapted cutlery, or adapted crayons, among other.

Mobility aids, devices and assistive technology are external products, including devices, equipment, instruments and software, specially produced or generally available to maintain or improve an individual's functioning and independence and to facilitate participation and enhance overall well-being.[8] They can also help prevent secondary impairments and health conditions.

- To ensure proper use and reduce risks, assistive devices should be accompanied by appropriate services such as referral, prescription, fitting/adjusting of the product to the child, training on its use, follow-up, maintenance and re-pairs. Therefore, 'one-off' distribution of assistive devices should be avoided.[9]
- Examples of assistive devices and technologies include wheelchairs, prostheses, hearing aids, visual aids, and specialized computer software and hardware that increase mobility, hearing, vision, or communication capacities. The WHO list of priority assistive products can inform the planning and procurement of assistive devices.[10]

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[8] [add ref to p. 35 in rehab in health systems: https://www.who.int/disabilities/rehabilitation_health_systems/en/]
[9] UNICEF (2017) *Including children with disabilities in humanitarian action – Health booklet.*
[10] For the full list and more information, see
https://www.who.int/phi/implementation/assistive_technology/global_survey-apl/en/

- Without pre-existing data on children and adults with disabilities, estimate that 3 per cent of the population needs assistive devices.[11]
- Standards recommend that to also include specialized non-food items (NFIs) and mobility equipment, an additional 3-4 per cent budget is recommended.[12]

How can we explain the rationale for all the above in budgets?

Here are some examples of budget lines and rationale for these expenses that you can use:

- All information on services will be designed and produced in multiple and accessible formats, with potential support of accessibility consultants and in consultation with women with disabilities and older women.
- Facilities, products, environments and services will be designed following universal design principles to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. In addition, reasonable accommodation will be provided for situations where persons with disabilities will require access to a non-accessible environment.
- Online and face-to-face consultations and trainings will be made accessible for women and girls with disabilities, including by selecting accessible venues, designing documents in accessible formats, and providing reasonable accommodation (such as sign language interpretation), upon request of participants with disabilities.

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[11] Adapted from UNICEF and WHO (2015) *Assistive Technology for Children with Disabilities: Creating opportunities for education, inclusion and participation – A discussion paper*.

[12] See *Humanitarian inclusion standards for older people and people with disabilities*.