



The European Union's Civil Society in Development Programme for Tajikistan

SUMMARY

**ON RESULTS OF RESEARCH ON THE
ASSESSMENT OF THE ACCESSIBILITY OF
BUILDINGS AND PREMISES OF THE BRANCHES
OF STATE INSTITUTION "ADULT TRAINING
CENTER OF TAJIKISTAN" FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES AND LOW MOBILITY**

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SUMMARY

ON RESULTS OF RESEARCH ON THE ASSESSMENT OF THE ACCESSIBILITY OF BUILDINGS AND PREMISES OF THE BRANCHES OF STATE INSTITUTION "ADULT TRAINING CENTER OF TAJKISTAN" FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND LOW MOBILITY

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I. Introduction

Accessibility of facilities and educational services for persons with disabilities and people with limited mobility is the fundamental principle of the Law of the Tajikistan Republic “On social protection of persons with disabilities” (adopted on December 29, 2010 No. 675). The state policy of the Tajikistan Republic in the field of social protection of persons with disabilities is implemented on the basis of “Accessibility and equity of persons with disabilities, along with other citizens, to health, education, recreation, travel and free choice of occupation, including job” (Article 3)¹.

These measures to identify and eliminate (minimize) barriers to access, in particular, relates to: a) buildings, roads, transport and other internal and external facilities, including schools, residential buildings, medical facilities and workplaces; b) information, communication and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.

Also, state authorities, self-governance bodies of settlements and villages, other organizations should take appropriate measures to ensure the free/ unhindered access of persons with disabilities (including people with visual impairment, hearing problems, mental disabilities and using wheelchairs) to social infrastructure facilities.

Accessibility of social infrastructure is provided through the installation of appropriate facilities for persons with disabilities (PWD), which must be considered when planning and building cities, other settlements, the formation of residential areas and recreation areas, residential and recreational areas, when developing design solutions for new construction and

¹ Law of the Tajikistan Republic “On social protection of persons with disabilities” (adopted on December 29, 2010 No. 675).

reconstruction of existing buildings, structures and their complexes (Article 25)².

Access of PWD to education is considered as provided via general and free pre-school, primary general, basic general, secondary general education and secondary vocational education, as well as free higher education. Vocational training and education of PWD in the special educational institutions are carried out in accordance with state educational standards on the basis of educational programs adapted for training of persons with disabilities.

Thus, the accessibility of facilities and educational services for PWD and people with limited mobility is the creation of a barrier-free environment, i.e. ensuring comfortable learning and movement, providing access to all areas of the training facilities, furniture and equipment elements - independently and without external assistance.

In this context/ case, accessibility is understood as a combination of 4 components:

1. Accessibility of the branches' premises (compounds) of the State Institution "Adult Training Center of Tajikistan" (ATC) in terms of meeting the physical and physiological needs of the target group (TG);
2. The availability of material and technical means for the TG's training;
3. The presence of inclusive educational programs and adapted teaching and methodological support/ materials;

² Law of the Tajikistan Republic "On social protection of persons with disabilities" (adopted on December 29, 2010 No. 675).

4. Availability of specialists/ teachers working with TG.

At the same time, in RT there are still a number of problems in the field of the practical realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and people with limited mobility to unhindered access to buildings and premises based on an analysis of the system of domestic and international regulations in construction³ (SR&P RT 30-01-2015 "Urban building. Planning and building (of) settlements"), as well as to vocational/professional education in accordance with state educational standards.

According to the official statistics of the Statistical Agency under the President of the Tajikistan Republic, in 2016 there were 144,886 persons with disabilities (of whom 24,870 people were children under the age of 18) or 17 persons with disabilities for every 1,000 people. Persons with disabilities in Tajikistan account for about 1.6% of the total population.

The number of PWD in the world is 23% of the total population of the planet. This is about more than 1 billion people. According to WHO, the number of PWDs increases every year. According to statistics in China, there are more than 60 million PWD, which is 5% of its population; in the USA there are 54 million, equal to 19% of the total country population; in the UK- 27%, in Finland- 32%; in Russia now 15 million people, which makes up 9% of its total population.

In Tajikistan, PWDs are divided into several categories: war invalids and persons equated to them, people with disabilities of a general illness, people with disabilities of an occupational

³ As an example of best practice, RF SR&P 35-01-2001 were considered/ reviewed "Accessibility of buildings and structures for people with limited mobility"

disease, people with disabilities, received in the workplace, people with disabilities, received in military service, and children with disabilities.

In 2016, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan adopted the “National Program for the Rehabilitation of PWD for 2017-2020 yy-s”. This program is of a social and anti-crisis nature; its implementation will be carried out in consideration of the UN sustainable development goals, for the period until 2030. The program is aimed at enhancing the social protection of PWD, including their medical and social rehabilitation.

In TR, the number of PWD decreases annually: over the past 7 years, their number has decreased by 10% compared with 2010. The number of PWD reached the conditional “maximum” in 2011, reaching 171,447 people; but the number of the officially recognized PWD for the 2016 year was for 26,561 people less than that. In 2016, the number of persons with disabilities, first registered as disabled, also decreased by 38% compared with 2010 and amounted to 8,006 people, of which 3,337 were women. This decrease/ reduction was tied to a number of reasons, including: a) decrease in the number of persons with disabilities (for example, in the category of “disabled war veterans”); b) annually, for uncertain reasons, the number of citizens applying for disability determination/ recognition/ registration decreases; c) the reduction in the number of PWD is related to the disability confirmation surveys conducted by the Agency of Social Insurance and Pension under the Government of the Tajikistan Republic. Thus, in accordance with this survey in 2017, which covered 75,177 people, more than 12 thousand citizens of Tajikistan did not confirm the disability, in connection with which they were completely stopped paying pensions; another 7 thousand people were transferred from one disability group to another.

1.1. Information about "Promotion of Social Change and Inclusive Education" Project

On April 1, 2018 public organizations the League of Women with Disabilities “Ishtirok” and “Adult Education of Association Tajikistan” in partnership with the Country Office of the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV International) in Tajikistan on the financial support of the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development started implementation of a project, named “Promotion of Social Change and Inclusive Education”⁴.

The goal of the project is to help to improve the access of young people with disabilities between 15 and 29 years-old to quality educational services for vocational education and training in Tajikistan through introduction of a barrier-free environment, inclusive curricula and appropriate training of teachers, and specialists in the branches of the SI “Adult Education Center of Tajikistan (ATC)” in the three pilot districts: the cities of Dushanbe and Penjikent, as well as the urban-type settlement of Rasht.

Within the framework of the project, there was carried out a baseline study to assess:

1. ATC branches premises/ classrooms, as well to collect a reliable and complete information about their availability, safety, comfort and awareness of the TG about them;
2. Compliance/ appropriateness of the material and technical resources and educational programs with the requirements

⁴ “INCLUSION: Promotion of Social Change and Inclusive Education” within the framework of the program “Civil Society in Development”, (CSO-LA/2017/155023/6)

of the educational system and the technical terms/ requirements to carry out trainings for the TG.

In accordance with the TOR, the study included the preparatory work, collection, processing and analysis of data, as well as the preparation of the full and short versions of the report. On completion of the study, there were worked out recommendations for making managerial decisions on improvement of the TG’s accessibility to the educational services.

II. Findings and Recommendations

The Baseline study was carried out to assess:

1. Accessibility, safety and comfort of the ATC branches’ premises, as well as availability of the necessary information; their access for persons with disabilities of various categories;
2. Compliance/ appropriateness of the material and technical resources and educational programs with the requirements of the educational system and the technical terms/ requirements to carry out trainings for the TG.

The assessment methodology was developed on the basis of legal requirements, regulations, including SSRP. This Report presents the results of the evaluation for Criterion #3 “Provision of the inclusive educational programs”; Criterion #4 “Accessibility of classrooms” and Criterion #5 “Availability of the inclusive educational programs”. For each of the criteria, there were set/ identified indicators and ranks. A complete assessment of accessibility included evaluation of the mentioned 3 indicators via 18 identificators and 91 rank levels.

If a requirement on any of the indicators was met, there was awarded one point.

Findings on pilot and control ATCs

In general, the results of the observations - carried out and interviews with the managerial staff of the ATC branches in the pilot and control ATC branches resulted in formulation of the below list of conclusions.

General conclusions for the pilot and control ATC:

Inclusive training in general groups is organized in/at a half of the ATC branches. There was observed some individual trainings at the ATC branches, as well. In some of the ATC branches, they trained people with musculoskeletal disorders and hearing impairments on sewer/ seamstress, hairdresser, accountant, a confectioner, cook, electrician, welder and PC operator/ computing courses;

- ✓ Assessment of the accessibility/ convenience status of the ATC branches' premises to/ for persons with disabilities identified that an unimpeded access and movement conditions of the TG representatives is provided not in all the ATC branches;
- ✓ There are no specialized material and technical means for realization of the educational services to the TG in all the ATC branches. This fact indicates that implementation of the educational services at the existing ATC branches does not match the accessibility criteria for all categories of TG;
- ✓ There are no regulatory documents and educational programs, which regulate training activities with the TG;

- ✓ According to the results of surveys of the ATC branches, availability of specialists/ teachers for the training of TG is estimated at 6% out of 100%.

Conclusions on the pilot branches of the ATC by criteria

a. Criteria: Accessibility/ convenience of the premises

- ✓ Requirements under this criterion are in the most match in all three ATC pilot branches: Dushanbe (A.Navoi str.), Penjikent and Rasht. It should be noted that the all the three branches of ATCs are placed/ located on the ground floor of administrative buildings;
- ✓ An Information board with the list of the provided services and hours of operation was noticed only in the Dushanbe pilot branch;
- ✓ Sanitary facilities are not adapted to the TG needs in none of the pilot branches;

b. Criteria: Accessibility/ convenience of the classrooms.

- ✓ According to this criterion, the requirements towards convenience/ accessibility of the classrooms are partially fulfilled: compliance with the door width requirements, threshold height, availability of tactile information about the classroom's assignment;
- ✓ According to interviews with the management of the ATC branches, the material and technical resources/ means necessary to ensure access of the TG to educational services are not provided in no of the ATC pilot branches.

c. Criteria: Availability of the Inclusive Education and Training Programs

- ✓ Provision of educational services for the TG assumes availability of the regulatory documents, which are related to the work with the TG, in/ at the AYTC branches (laws of TR, provisions, Instructions, action plans for the development of inclusive education, etc.) as well as the development and use of specialized educational programs in consideration of the training specifics for each category of persons with disabilities;
- ✓ According to responses of all the ATC pilot districts branches' managerial staff, regulatory documents and educational programs related to the work with the TG are not available;
- ✓ Only in the Dushanbe pilot branch of the ATC, access of the TG is organized to educational and methodical publications in electronic form, including through electronic library systems.

Finding on the control ATCs

a. Criteria: Accessibility/ convenience of the premises.

The control branches in relation to the pilot ones are the 34 ATC branches, located in the capital and the four regions (viloyats) of the country and in each of them the number of the ATC branches is different: namely, in Dushanbe- two ATC branches; in Sughd region- 9 ones; in the Khatlon region- 11 ATC branches; in the districts of the republican subordination- 5 and in Badakhshan- 6 branches.

- ✓ Bathrooms and toilets are not adapted and available for the TG;
- ✓ The average compliance with the requirements of this Criterion in the ATC control branches amounts 29%;

Criterion: Accessibility of the classrooms.

- ✓ In 34 the control districts, this criteria's requirements are fulfilled on the medium level and only according to the first indicator "General requirements for a classroom";
- ✓ On average, compliance with the requirements to an accessible classroom is very low (13%) in all the ATC control branches.

Criterion: Availability of the Inclusive Education and Training Programs.

According to the Criterion #5, there was assessed: 1) on educational programs - availability of teaching and methodical materials and implementation of the educational activities for/ with the TG; 2) on availability of specialists.

- ✓ In the 12 ATC control branches out of the 34 ones, implementation of the training activities for persons with disabilities of various categories is on the way. At the same time, only few ATC branches have educational programs;
- ✓ Group and individual inclusive training courses are organized in one of the 2 ATC control branches of Dushanbe;

- ✓ Specialists that are available in the several ATC branches, mainly are pedagogics/ psychologists and social workers, by qualification.

General Findings

In all the 36 ATC branches, improvement of the accessibility of educational services, provided for the target groups is required⁵ (more details are given separately, on/ for each report);

1. In the course of the survey with the ATC branches managerial staff, it was found out that in all the ATC branches there are no specialized material and technical means/ resources, needed for implementation of educational services to the TG. This fact indicates that provision of educational services by the branches for all categories of the TG does not correspond to availability requirements;
2. Provision of educational services for the TG assumes availability of the regulatory documents, which are related to the work with the TG, in/ at the ATC branches (laws of TR, provisions, Instructions, action plans for the development of inclusive education, etc.) as well as the development and use of specialized educational programs in consideration of the training specifics for each category of persons with disabilities. According to responses of all the ATC pilot districts branches' managerial staff, regulatory documents and educational programs related to the work with the TG are not available;

⁵ The results of the study are compiled into separate reports for each district and include: results of observation, survey of heads of the ATC branches, recommendations for improving accessibility.

General Recommendations

1. It is necessary to think of possibilities to provide the ATC branches with training and methodical publications in the electronic form/ version, audio textbooks, teaching guides, teaching materials, which are adapted to the TG. Development or adaptation of the existing training materials and methodological publications is also needed;
2. When re- training courses for specialists of the ATC branches, it is necessary to include into their educational program courses on principles and methods of inclusive education. A possible mechanism to ensure sustainability of trainings for the branches' training specialists, may be inclusion of the additional relevant disciplines on qualifications of "social worker" and "psychologist" into the curricula of training specialists, at the higher schools.
3. To organize vocational training for persons with disabilities;
4. To increase the capacity of teaching staff on work with the TG;
5. To introduce an additional module on the technology of social adaptation of persons with disabilities of different categories into the training course of social workers, in order to facilitate their vocational education. To enter this course in all branches;
6. To increase the informational capacity of the ATC website by adding information on the activities of all branches, on services they provide, including services to the TG, indicating availability of training courses for the certain categories of disabilities;
7. Managers of all the ATC branches have to pay a special attention to employment of those representatives of the target group, who have been trained in the courses.

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The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 60 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders. To this end the EU is active in Tajikistan since 1992 and provides approximately EUR 35 million annually in development assistance.