Disability-inclusive elections training

A training toolkit to apply disability-inclusive approaches for enhancing voting accessibility

YoWDO
Unlocking Hidden Potentials

UK International Development
Partnership | Progress | Prosperity

Sightsavers

Contents

Acknowledgements 4

Introduction 5

How to use the guide 5

Training objective 6

Preparation for the training 6

Location and accessibility 6

Duration 7

Facilitators 7

Participants 8

Materials 9

Planning ahead 9

Training approach 10

Facilitation approach 10

Three-day training agenda 11

Optional modules 13

Part 1: Introduction to disability inclusion 14

Session 1: Welcome and introductions 15

Session 2: Training objectives and agenda 16

Session 3: People with disabilities: a small minority? 18

Session 4: Disability-inclusive language 20

Session 5: Models of disability 22

Session 6: Understanding disability constituencies 24

Part 2: Disability-inclusive elections 28

Session 7: Disability inclusion in the electoral cycle 29

Session 8: Universal accessibility and elections 32

Session 9: International and national legal frameworks 34

Part 3: Identifying barriers and sharing best practice 38

Session 10: Activity: Identifying barriers and sharing best practice 39

Session 11: Barriers to participating in elections 42

Session 12: Good practices for voting accessibility 44

Part 4: Steps for carrying out a voting accessibility audit 46

Session 13: Overview of the voting accessibility audit 47

Session 14: Step 1: Making maps 51

Session 15: Step 2: Taking photos 53

Session 16: Step 3: Completing the checklist 55

Session 17: Step 4: Carrying out surveys 57

Session 18: Voting accessibility audit simulation 60

Session 19: Step 5: Making recommendations 62

Session 20: Planning audits and reporting 64

Session 21: Optional modules 67

Session 22: Evaluation 68

Session 23: Next steps, thanks and closure 69

Annexes 71

Helpful resources 71

References 71

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the creation and roll-out of this training toolkit to promote the rights of people with disabilities to effectively and fully participate in elections. Your efforts to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in election processes has impacted accessibility, and is a significant stride forward in eradicating barriers. Thank you for your commitment to inclusion.

We would particularly like to thank our project partners – the Youth with Disabilities Organisation (YoWDO) Tanzania and the Plateforme Inclusive Society for Persons with Disabilities in Cameroon – for their unwavering dedication and leadership in promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities in election processes.

This training toolkit was produced by Colleen Roberts, Sightsavers' global technical lead for social inclusion, with the support of Sandra Rimoh, programme officer for social inclusion, and Joachim Simbila, project officer for citizenship and political participation.

Existing content referenced

The content on disability-inclusive elections in this training toolkit benefitted from guidance in the Election Access Observation Toolkit – the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) 2018.

Some sections in this training toolkit have been adapted from the **Sightsavers sexual health and rights training pack** developed through the Women's Integrated Sexual Health Programme (WISH), funded by the United Kingdom's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

For any questions regarding this training manual and Sightsavers' inclusive citizenship area of work, please contact Colleen Roberts, Sightsavers' global technical lead for social inclusion, at **croberts@sightsavers.org**.

Introduction

This toolkit was developed and implemented by Sightsavers as part of the Irish Aid-funded political participation project in Cameroon and Senegal. It was further adapted and rolled out through the disability-inclusive citizenship and political participation project in Tanzania, with funding from the FCDO. These projects are part of Sightsavers' inclusive citizenship area of work, which aims to ensure that all people with disabilities – particularly women and young people – are engaged in political life, governance processes and civil society in order to exercise their rights and influence inclusive policies.

How to use the guide

The toolkit is comprised of three elements: this training manual, a PowerPoint presentation and 10 tools (listed below).

1. **Training manual.** This has been designed to guide facilitators through the training sessions. Facilitators will need to do some preparation before the start of each session. It's important to allow enough time for this so that sessions run smoothly. At the start of each section is a box that briefly describes the preparation required for that particular session.

   A few weeks before training begins, it is advised that the entire manual is read carefully and all preparation takes place.

   During training itself, facilitators will benefit greatly from having a printed copy of this manual to hand, so please ensure you do this in advance.

2. **PowerPoint presentation.** Facilitators are strongly encouraged to use this presentation alongside the training manual, as they have been designed to be used together. Each session clearly states which slides correspond to the wording in the manual.

3. **Tools.** There are 10 tools, or supplementary documents, for use during the training. The training manual states clearly when these are to be used. The tools are:

   - Training participation list template (facilitator use only)
   - Training agenda
   - Disability terminology handout
   - The Game of Life character cards
   - Training feedback form

Five tools to be used on election day by participants

- Voting accessibility maps template
- Voting accessibility checklist
- Voting accessibility survey
- Voting accessibility recommendations template
- Voting accessibility audit report template

Legend

Preparation for the session: This icon shows which sessions require advance preparation by the facilitator.

PowerPoint slides: This icon shows which slide numbers in the presentation correspond to the content of each session.

Contextualisation: This icon highlights sections of the text that require rewriting by facilitators, to ensure text makes sense for the particular setting and location where they're running the session.

Training objective

The training aims to build the capacity of election observers to conduct voting accessibility audits at polling stations. This will help them identify barriers and provide recommendations on how to address those barriers. Following the training, election observers will be:

- More aware of disability inclusion
- Familiar with the key principles of inclusive elections and the voting rights of people with disabilities
- Able to carry out accessibility audits of polling stations to make concrete recommendations for improving voting accessibility for people with disabilities

Preparation for the training

Location and accessibility

Before the meeting	
✔	**Check accessibility requirements**
	Ensure invitations include a request for people to register their accessibility requirements. These could include requests for Braille or large-print documents, a sign language interpreter, a translator, wheelchair access or facilities for service dogs.
	Ask whether anyone requires provisions for support people, or provision for transport to the venue itself.
	Give attendees at least two weeks' notice, and up to one month if possible, so necessary adjustments can be made.
	Remember! Not all disabilities are visible, and people may choose to not disclose their disability. Everyone – both trainers and participants – has a right to participate in the training on an equal basis with others in an accessible environment.
✔	**Select a suitable venue** There are a number of aspects to consider for this training
	If possible, use the same location where the audit will take place on voting day. This will help participants to visualise the polling station.
	Choose a venue with disabled parking spaces, wheelchair access, quiet spaces and accessible toilets.
	Pick a room/rooms with plenty of space and if possible, natural light and no obstructions such as pillars. You will need to allow participants space to move around for activities and group discussions.

	You will need a dedicated space to set up a mock polling station. Please see page 47 for more information about this.
	Ensure the location of the venue itself is easily accessible.
✔	**Test your equipment**
	Set up the meeting room(s) and mock polling station in advance, and check the equipment is working.
✔	**Tell participants what to expect**
	For this training, participants will be receiving the training agenda and tools at least two weeks in advance, in whatever accessible format is necessary.

Duration

A minimum of three full days are required to deliver the training content. However, more days or more time could be required if additional content is added or to suit specific learning needs. The timings in the training agenda can be adapted according to your specific training context and participant needs. It is also important to discuss with participants which days of the week work best for them.

Facilitators

Where possible, training should be led by people with lived experience. Facilitators should ideally be from organisations of people with disabilities (OPDs) or be people with disabilities from other types of civil society organisations (CSOs). They should have training facilitation experience, including on disability rights and/or citizenship and political participation topics.

A training of trainers can guide facilitators on how to deliver the content more effectively. This could be led by experienced trainers of CSOs/OPDs, or by other organisations with disability-inclusion expertise such as Sightsavers. If a training of trainers is not possible, then facilitators should be orientated on the training methodology, approach, principles and content so that any questions they have can be addressed.

A minimum of two facilitators is required, who should represent different genders, ages and types of impairments. To promote disability mainstreaming of election processes, it may be beneficial, where possible, that one trainer is from a disability-focused organisation and one is from a CSO with expertise in elections/democracy strengthening. This will ensure diverse areas of expertise.

It is possible to invite other experts to lead specific presentations or group activities. For example, a policy expert could lead a presentation on inclusion in the national electoral legislation and policy framework.

Once facilitators have been identified, it is important to allow them adequate time and resources to prepare for the delivery of the training. For example, ensure that they have access to this training toolkit well in advance, and that they contribute to the development of the training plan, such as selection of dates and venue.

Elections are an opportunity to include people with disabilities in key democratic processes. However, they can also bring certain risks and barriers, and reinforce underlying stigma and discrimination. It is important these are discussed with facilitators and that they can receive ongoing support and supervision.

Participants

Identify and invite participants in advance – ideally give them one month's notice, and a minimum of two weeks. The agenda and handouts should also be provided to participants ahead of the training in accessible formats (see 'Planning ahead', below).

Participants should have **a role in promoting the voting accessibility for people with disabilities in elections**, and ideally be accredited election observers who will be present at polling stations on voting day.

Participants can include:

- Organisations of people with disabilities (OPDs)
- Other civil society organisations (CSOs) engaging in election observation
- Disability coordination mechanisms, such as disability committees
- Representatives from election management bodies
- Local electoral officials/polling officers
- International election observer missions

As training focuses on disability inclusion in impartial and neutral election observation, it is targeted at non-government and non-political/partisan participants. However, election management bodies (EMBs) and local election authorities could also benefit from the training to enhance disability inclusion in their systems and processes.

Government disability mechanisms and committees could also use this training to gain more insight into disability-inclusive elections in line with article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD)[1]. This states that 'persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others' and that 'voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use'.

The training aims to **support collaboration and joint efforts** in promoting accessible voting and inclusive elections more broadly. Therefore, trainings of mixed participant profiles linking up the disability movement and other CSOs can also be beneficial.

There should be gender parity among the participants, and it is important to encourage the involvement of young people. Participants should include people with different types of disabilities, such as hearing, visual, intellectual, mental and physical impairments.

Use the training participation list template to record information about each participant. Finally, let participants know in advance that they will need to:

- Be on time every day
- Follow the training to the end
- Conduct the accessibility audit on voting day
- Participate in the audit report after the elections

Materials

The following materials will be required for the training.

	Computer, video projector, sound speakers
	Internet access
	Flipchart paper, black and coloured markers
	Sticky notes
	Blu Tack or sticky tape
	Notepaper and pens
	Water for participants
	Ballot box
	Ballot papers mock-ups
	Mock polling station

Planning ahead

Each session includes preparation tips for facilitators explaining what should be prepared ahead of each session. This could mean having printouts ready for distribution, researching context-specific information or contextualising tools for the appropriate setting. Most sessions require preparation work, so please take the time to read through everything well in advance.

It is also advisable that you do a practice run of all group work and activities at the venue ahead of the training itself. This will ensure you have enough space for activities such as the 'Game of Life' in session 10, and give you time to make any adaptations. Think also about how you plan to set up the room to suit everyone's needs.

For accessibility purposes, and to ensure that participants are familiar with the voting accessibility audit tools, it is advisable that all resources are shared with participants in advance of the training, in the format they require. This will help to familiarise them with the content, will save time during the training, and will allow participants to arrive ready with questions and reflections on the resources.

A key part of this preparation requires facilitators to consider whether they need to adapt any of the sessions or tools in respect of their context. This could mean adapting wording in relation to your country's electoral policy, sourcing existing evidence on barriers, or any previous observation experience in your location(s).

Training approach

To achieve the overall aim – enhancing the capacity of people with disabilities to actively engage in electoral processes to make them more inclusive – training must be **participatory, interactive, practical, accessible and impartial.**

Participatory: Ensure that everyone is involved and consider the needs of people with different types of impairments. For example, allow people with hearing difficulties enough time to absorb the translated content, and ask them for their opinion. Give everyone adequate time to share and reflect – this might mean being proactive in facilitation by allowing everyone time to speak. Encourage women and participants who are less confident to express themselves.

Interactive: Before delivering the content, start by letting participants express themselves, and share their knowledge and experience. The activities should foster interaction.

Practical: The aim is to test concepts and ideas that participants will put into practice during elections. The voting accessibility checklist exercise must be based on reality on the ground.

Accessible: The training approach, content, materials, space and facilitation should all be adapted according to the specific needs of participants with different impairment types. See www.sightsavers.org/brand-book/accessibility-pack/in-person-meetings for more information.

Impartial: It is important to remind participants from the beginning that the training is impartial, neutral and non-partisan. It is vital that facilitators ensure these principles are upheld throughout. The aim is not to discuss politics or debate political opinions, but to learn how to strengthen the participation of people with disabilities in elections.

Facilitation approach

Please note that the content of this manual is designed so that participants are firstly made familiar with the concepts needed to promote disability inclusion in elections, before key actions are shared on how to make this happen. It is therefore important to follow the order in the agenda and PowerPoint slides.

Solid colour slides in the accompanying PowerPoint presentation indicate that group work (an activity or discussion) will be facilitated.

Keep a blank flipchart at the front for key notes/ideas, and as you go through training, tear off the pages and stick them to the walls of the room. Encourage participants to take the time to read through these notes at the start of each day to recap the previous day's sessions.

When writing on the flipchart, read aloud to the group as you go. This is important for people with visual impairment.

Three-day training agenda

Day 1

Part 1: Introduction to disability inclusion		
Time	**Duration**	**Session name**
9:00 – 9:30	30 mins	Welcome and introductions
9:30 – 10:00	30 mins	Training objectives and agenda
10:00 – 10:30	30 mins	People with disabilities: a small minority?
10:30 – 11:00	30 mins	Break
11:00 – 11:45	45 mins	Disability-inclusive language
11:45 – 12:30	45 mins	Models of disability
12:30 – 13:30	60 mins	Lunch
13:30 – 14:15	45 mins	Understanding disability constituencies

Part 2: Disability-inclusive elections		
Time	**Duration**	**Session name**
14:15 – 15:15	60 mins	Disability inclusion in the electoral cycle
15:15 – 15:45	30 mins	Universal accessibility and elections
15:45 – 16:30	45 mins	International and national legal frameworks
16:30	-	End of day one

Day 2

Part 2: Disability-inclusive elections (continued)		
Time	**Duration**	**Session name**
9:00 – 9:15	15 mins	Participant welcome and recap of day one

Part 3: Identifying barriers and sharing best practice		
Time	**Duration**	**Session name**
9:15 – 9:45	30 mins	Activity: the Game of Life
9:45 – 10:30	45 mins	Barriers to participating in elections
10:30 – 11:00	30 mins	Break
11:00 – 11:30	30 mins	Good practices for voting accessibility

Part 4: Steps for carrying out a voting accessibility audit		
Time	**Duration**	**Session name**
11:30 – 12:00	30 mins	Overview of the voting accessibility audit
12:00 – 13:00	60 mins	Step 1: Making maps
13:00 – 14:00	60 mins	Lunch
14:00 – 14:30	30 mins	Step 2: Taking photos
14:30 – 15:30	60 mins	Step 3: Completing the checklist
15:30 – 16:30	60 mins	Step 4: Carrying out surveys
16:30	-	End of day two

Day 3

Part 4: Steps for carrying out a voting accessibility audit (continued)		
Time	**Duration**	**Session name**
9:00 – 9:15	15 mins	Participant welcome and recap of day two
9:15 – 10:15	60 mins	Voting accessibility audit simulation
10:15 – 10:45	30 mins	Break
10:45 – 11:45	60 mins	Step 5: Making recommendations
11:45 – 12:45	60 mins	Planning audits and reporting
12:45 – 13:45	60 mins	Lunch
13:45 – 15:45	2 hours	Optional modules (see below)
15:45 – 16:15	30 mins	Evaluation
16:15 – 16:30	15 mins	Next steps, thanks and closure
16:30	-	End of training

Optional modules

You may need to include additional modules or sessions according to your specific context and the needs of your participants. These should be identified prior to the training as part of a capacity-building needs assessment, which will help you to inform and adapt your training content. Examples include:

- Official guidelines for election observers from election management bodies.
- Orientation on the disability movement and OPDs in your context, especially for general election observer organisations who are may not be familiar with disability rights networks.
- Security training for election observers, especially in contexts where risks have been identified.
- Safeguarding training, especially for staff that have not already been trained or need a refresher.
- Communications training, such as how to appropriately communicate regarding efforts to promote disability inclusion in elections and share key messages.

Introduction to disability inclusion

01

Session 1: Welcome and introductions

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, individual introductions, plenary discussion
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers, tape or Blu Tack

Preparing for this session

Facilitation

- Ensure the room is laid out properly
- Ensure the screen, computer and soundsystem are working
- Ensure you have all the necessary materials for day one ready (such as flipcharts and pens). Place fresh water on the tables awaiting guests
- Ensure you arrive in good time before the participants so you can welcome them

PowerPoint slides script

1-3

PowerPoint slide 1

Display slide 1 on the screen as participants enter the room, take their seats and get settled.

PowerPoint slide 2

When participants are settled and have the facilitators' attention, go to slide 2. Facilitators start by introducing themselves and warmly welcoming participants.

PowerPoint slide 3

Invite participants to introduce themselves one by one, sharing their name, organisation, role and experiences. Invite everyone to agree on rules around accessibility. Write these on a flipchart sheet and tape it to a wall for the duration of the training. Examples could include:

- Ensure regular communication breaks
- Speak clearly and take turns to talk, never speaking over one another (this is particularly helpful for the sign language interpreter)
- Say your name before you speak (this will allow people with visual impairments and sign language interpreters know who is contributing)
- For group work, identify someone who can write down the ideas of others
- Describe any images or graphics in the slide show, as well as what the flipchart looks like during group work

Emphasise that the training is impartial, neutral and non-political. It is not a space to debate political views, but to focus on disability inclusion in election processes.

Let participants know that they can take breaks at any time if they find any subject matter about stigma or discrimination triggering. Indicate a separate quiet room in the venue that can be used.

Session 2: Training objectives and agenda

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, plenary discussion, questions
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers, tape or Blu Tack

Preparing for this session

Materials

Participants should receive the training agenda in advance. It's useful to also have a few copies printed out for distribution on the day for those who ask for them.

PowerPoint slides script

4-11

PowerPoint slide 4

Explain that in this session, you will go through the training objectives and agenda. But first, you have a couple of questions for the group.

PowerPoint slide 5

Ask the following question:

Why is it important for people with disabilities to vote?

Depending on your setting, questions can be asked to the full group or in smaller groups. Record the answers on a flipchart.

PowerPoint slide 6

Go through the responses on the slides with the group, most of which the group may have come up with themselves.

PowerPoint slide 7

Now ask the group another question:

Why conduct an accessibility audit at polling stations?

As before, record the answers on a flipchart.

PowerPoint slide 8

Go through the responses on the slides with the group, most of which they may have come up with themselves.

PowerPoint slide 9

Training objective

The training aims to build the capacity of election observers to conduct voting accessibility audits at polling stations in order to identify barriers and provide recommendations on how to address them.

PowerPoint slide 10

Following the training, the group will be:

- More aware of disability inclusion
- Familiar with the key principles of inclusive elections and the voting rights of people with disabilities
- Able to carry out accessibility audits of polling stations to make concrete recommendations for improving voting accessibility for people with disabilities

PowerPoint slide 11

Hand out the training agenda to all participants.

Share that the training is divided into four parts, which are in order and will include content and learning to help meet the training objectives:

1. Introduction to disability inclusion
2. Disability-inclusive elections
3. Identifying barriers and sharing best practice
4. Steps for carrying out a voting accessibility audit

Now invite participants to ask any questions they may have, which may be about the training as a whole or what is coming up over the next three days.

Session 3: People with disabilities: a small minority?

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group work
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers, tape or Blu Tack
What is this session for?	To clarify the definition of disability
What will it help you achieve?	To apply this definition to your own context

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

In this session, you will be sharing some facts and statistics about disability in your context. Slide 13 shows a Tanzania-specific example. Slide 14 has been left blank for you to add your own country-relevant information. Ensure you have done this in advance.

PowerPoint slides script

12-16

PowerPoint slide 12

Explain that people with disabilities are often considered a small minority group and are often not prioritised for this reason.

PowerPoint slide 13

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that **16 per cent of the global population lives with a disability** – that's 1.3 billion people (or one in six). While people with disabilities are often considered a minority group, the global population of those with disabilities is nearly 19 times the entire population of Tanzania.

The World Health Organization estimates that nearly **80 per cent of those 1.3 billion people live in low- and middle-income countries**. The prevalence for the African region is estimated at 12.8 per cent, but it is worth highlighting that underdiagnosis and under-reporting may lead to underestimation in many countries.

The number of people with disabilities is **destined to increase** due to the interplay of numerous factors such as ageing and an increase in non-communicable diseases. Nearly one in three people over the age of 60 lives with a disability, and disability is **more prevalent among women compared to men.**

PowerPoint slide 14

Slide 14 has been left blank for you to input country-specific information stats on disability. If you don't have any, please delete this slide from the slide deck.

PowerPoint slide 15

Group work

1. Divide participants into small groups and give them a notepad and pen.
2. Ask each group to answer the question: what is your definition of disability?
3. After five minutes, invite participants to sit again in plenary and read out the definitions agreed by each group.
4. Thank participants for their contributions and invite them to reflect on the definitions presented, identifying similarities and differences.

PowerPoint slide 16

Share with the group the definition of disability as written by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The CRPD is the most important international instrument in the field of disability and international development.

30-minute break

Session 4: Disability-inclusive language

Duration	45 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group work, plenary discussion
Resources	Slides, sticky notes, pens, flipchart
What is this session for?	To identify positive and negative disability terminology
What will it help you achieve?	To be more aware of the power of language when discussing disability and people with disabilities

Preparing for this session

Materials

You will be distributing a **disability handout** to each participant during this session. It will include a list of disability terminology (also listed on slides 19 to 21), as well as practical reminders for the five steps of the voting accessibility audit itself. Print out copies for those who can read them, and ensure accessible formats are available.

PowerPoint slides script

17-21

PowerPoint slide 17

In this session, participants will be exploring the language of disability and identifying positive terminology, as well as negative expressions that should be avoided.

The power of language

Explain that the language we use defines reality. **Language is never neutral**. Positive language can empower people, while derogatory terms can have a real negative impact on the lives of people and their inclusion in society.

Explain that language is **fluid and dynamic**. Terminology evolves over time. Certain expressions that were considered acceptable 50 years ago may not be acceptable today. Similarly, some expressions may have different meanings in different contexts.

PowerPoint slide 18-21

Group work

1. Divide participants into groups and give them sticky notes and pens.
2. Invite them to identify positive and negative words used to describe disability and people with disabilities. They can use words in English as well as terms in local languages or dialects. Invite them to write each word on a separate sticky note.
3. While participants conduct their group work, draw a vertical line in the middle of a flipchart sheet. On one side, draw a happy face (representing positive words); on the other, draw a sad face (representing negative words).

4. After 10 minutes, participants are invited to stick their notes on the flipchart in either the positive or negative column.
5. Now go through each word and phrase, asking participants to share their reflections and explain why they think they are positive or negative. You should aim to create an open space for participants to share their thoughts. Do not express any personal judgement on the opinions presented.
6. Once all the words have been discussed, ask participants to look at the disability handout. It contains a list of disability terminology, some of which they may have omitted in their own discussions. This list is also available on slides 19 to 21. Go through each term, explaining why some are encouraged and some not.

Localising language: Language used in policies, guidance and movements is not always the same language used by communities. It is important to reflect upon negative and positive disability language used in local languages in your context. To challenge stigma, it is important that disability-inclusive language is grounded in the languages that people use in their communities and daily lives.

Session 5: Models of disability

Duration	45 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group quiz, plenary discussion
Resources	Slides
What is this session for?	To learn about different models of disability
What will it help you achieve?	To consider which model is most prevalent in your context and the work you do

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

In this session, participants will be asked to consider which model of disability is most prevalent in their context. Have a few relevant examples prepared.

PowerPoint slides script

22-31

PowerPoint slide 22

Explain to the group that you will now be presenting an overview of the four different models of disability – theoretical frameworks that underpin different understandings of disability.

PowerPoint slide 23

Medical model of disability

Describe the image. This approach focuses on the individual, and regards disability as a health and an **individual problem**. It assumes that the individual has an abnormality and therefore needs to be '**cured**', 'repaired' or 'improved', and that efforts to support the individual should focus on finding a cure.

Proponents of this approach look at people with disabilities as 'defective' or 'abnormal', and focus their resources on 'fixing' their bodies and minds in order to conform with what society considers to be 'normal'. In this framework, it is the responsibility of individuals with disabilities to adapt to the way in which society is constructed and organised.

This approach is incredibly stigmatising and has led many people to be over-medicalised and abused.

PowerPoint slide 24

Charity model of disability

Describe the image. This approach focuses on individuals identified by their disability, portraying them as victims or objects of pity. With this approach, people with disabilities are seen as passive recipients of services, in need of charitable care.

This approach is very patronising. It assumes that people with disabilities cannot be independent and always require others to protect and make decisions for them.

PowerPoint slide 25

Social model of disability

Describe the image. The dominant approach promoted today began in the 1970s and evolved in response to the discontent of people with disabilities, who did not want to be treated as charity or medical cases. The social model focuses on **barriers in society** that disable and exclude people. This model emphasises that it is not the impairment that prevents a person from participating in society, but the barriers that exist in attitudes, environments, policies and practices. This model therefore focuses **on removing barriers** rather than 'fixing' the person.

Explain to the group that activists of the disability rights movement began to describe disability from a social perspective, demanding civil rights and fighting discrimination. As part of this approach, they started separating the concept of individual impairments from disability, which is seen as a form of oppression imposed by society, giving birth to the social model of disability.

PowerPoint slide 26

Human rights model of disability

Describe the image. Like the social model, the human rights model emphasises the need for society to evolve. It sees people with disabilities as an integral part of a diverse human society and culture. It emphasises that **all humans have rights**, and that all rights apply to all humans, so exclusion and discrimination are a violation of a person's human rights. This model recognises disability as a natural and common aspect of the human experience and is based on the principle that all individuals are entitled to **inalienable human rights**.

Like the social model, the human rights model emphasises the need for society to evolve. It sees people with disabilities as an integral part of a diverse human society and culture. It emphasises that all humans have rights, and that all rights apply to all humans, so exclusion from services is a violation of a person's human rights. It also emphasises that forceful treatments, admissions or procedures in a healthcare setting or communities, for example, are violations of a person's human rights.

PowerPoint slides 27-30

Group quiz

1. Read each statement on slides 27-30 to the group one by one, asking the group which model of disability each statement relates to.
2. Allow different participants to give their ideas. The answers are in the comments of the slides.

PowerPoint slide 31

Group discussions

In plenary, invite participants to reflect on the different models of disability, and to share their thoughts and observations.

The following questions may be useful to guide the conversation:

- Do you think there is a predominant model in your context?
- Which model do you follow in the work that you do?

60-minute lunch

Session 6: Understanding disability constituencies

Duration	45 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, plenary discussions
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers
What is this session for?	An overview of disability constituencies
What will it help you achieve?	To understand more about disability and intersectionality, and how people with disabilities self-identify

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

While disability constituencies may not vary a great deal across countries, it is worthwhile finding out ahead of this session which disabilities are faced with the most stigma and discrimination in your specific setting.

PowerPoint slides script

32-42

PowerPoint slide 32-42

Invite participants to share in plenary the different disabilities they are familiar with (such as blindness or deafness). As they provide responses, write them on the flipchart.

Once all suggestions have been recorded, explain that people who have similar impairments are very often grouped into so-called **disability constituencies**.

Sometimes, this process is led by people with disabilities themselves. It happens when individuals with similar impairments decide to form an organisation to advance the rights of people experiencing similar barriers. These organisations are often called **organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs)**. People choosing to join these organisations will generally self-identify with that disability constituency.

Invite participants to name some of these organisations.

Now click through the slides (see below), sharing some of the most common disability constituencies found in your country and further afield.

Please note: you can add or adjust any disability constituencies that you feel are not represented by slides 33 to 41. Remind participants that these are not fixed and clearly defined groups, and that not everyone will self-identify with them.

- **People with visual impairment (slide 33).** A broad range of people – from individuals who are fully blind and those with extremely limited residual sight, to people with mild eye conditions.

- **People with hearing impairment (slide 34)**. As we have seen in the example above, this not only includes people with different levels of residual hearing – from fully deaf to some residual hearing – but also very different identity connotations.
- **People with deafblindness.** Those who experience impairments both in the sight and hearing domains.
- **People with physical impairment (slide 35)** A broad category often used to refer to very diverse groups of individuals who were born with specific health conditions or who acquired them later in life. Examples include individuals with cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, amputations, dwarfism and spinal cord injuries.
- **People with cognitive or intellectual impairment (slide 36)**. Often used to refer to individuals who may experience difficulties with one or more types of mental tasks, such as remembering, reading, linguistic and verbal comprehension, math comprehension, visual comprehension, paying attention, and processing or producing information. Several conditions can be linked to cognitive and intellectual impairments, such as:
  - **Learning difficulties** such as dyslexia, dyscalculia or dysgraphia, which can cause problems with reading, writing, spelling or numbers, but don't impair general intelligence
  - **Developmental disabilities** including autism, which influence how people perceive the world and interact with others
  - **Genetic or congenital conditions** such as Down syndrome or microcephaly, which can cause a range of intellectual disabilities
  - **Conditions such as dementia**, an umbrella term used to describe several progressive or chronic diseases affecting memory, other cognitive abilities and behaviour
- **People with psychosocial disability and mental health conditions (slide 37)**. These include individuals with conditions such as anxiety, depression, phobias, bipolarism and schizophrenia.
- **People with chronic illnesses and energy-limiting conditions (slide 38)**. These include people living with conditions such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, stroke, arthritis, fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome.
- **People with multiple impairments (slide 39)**. Some people live with more than one impairment. For example, people with albinism experience both a skin condition and visual impairment. People with deafblindness experience impairments both in the sight and hearing domains.

PowerPoint slide 40

Invisible disabilities

Certain individuals can be easily identified as having a disability, for example those using specific assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, walking sticks, white canes or hearing aids. It is also the case for people whose conditions have visible manifestations – such as albinism, dwarfism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome or amputations.

Many people with disabilities, however, live with so-called invisible disabilities. These individuals experience numerous barriers in society on a daily basis, but their health conditions and impairments may not be immediately obvious. This is the case, for example, of people with anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, autism, energy-limiting conditions and many others.

Remember: Be kind, and don't make assumptions.

PowerPoint slide 41

Disability and intersectionality

Describe the image. As we have seen in this section, 'people with disabilities' are an incredibly diverse and rich group of individuals with their own unique characteristics and experiences. However, this goes beyond individual impairments.

PowerPoint slide 42

Group work

1. Invite participants to share in plenary examples of other characteristics that could define the identity of people with disabilities, on top of their individual impairments and health conditions.
2. As participants provide their responses, write them on a flipchart.
3. Once all inputs have been received, explain that women with disabilities, for example, are not just 'people' with disabilities: they are mothers, daughters, grandmothers, business owners, politicians, refugees, activists and more. **People with disabilities have multiple intersecting identities, exactly like any other human being**. Therefore, it is essential to consider the inclusion of people with disabilities in society – including when promoting accessible voting – not only in light of their individual impairments, but also in relation to their complex identities.

Multiple layers of identity such as gender, age, ethnic group, language, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, migratory status and many other factors **can add up to cause multiple layers of discrimination.**

It is therefore crucial to not look at people with disabilities just as people with disabilities – but to consider the multiple forms of exclusion they face, linked to their intersecting identities.

Disability-inclusive elections

02

Session 7: Disability inclusion in the electoral cycle

Duration	60 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group activity, gallery walk
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers, tape or Blu Tack
What is this session for?	To understand the importance of disability-inclusive elections and involvement of people with disabilities
What will it help you achieve?	To integrate disability inclusion into all stages of the electoral cycle, not just voting day

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

The image in slide 46 is an adapted version of an international electoral cycle graphic. It may be necessary to adapt this in advance of the training to suit your current setting. This session content is adapted from **'Equal Access: How to Include Persons with Disabilities in Elections and Political Processes'** by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and National Democratic Institute (NDI), November 21, 2014. This is a very helpful guide for the inclusion of people with disabilities in elections that you may want to share with participants at the end of the training.

PowerPoint slides script

43-50

PowerPoint slide 43

Why is it important for people with disabilities to vote?

- The political participation of people with disabilities is a human right and a way of shaping decisions and policies that affect them
- Elections are an opportunity for people with disabilities to exercise their rights and influence decisions
- Elections are also a space for people with disabilities to enhance their leadership, organise, build relations and publicly raise issues that are important to them as equal, active and engaged citizens

PowerPoint slide 44

Now let us turn our attention to understanding the electoral cycle and how to integrate disability inclusion throughout it. Elections are an ongoing process that continue long before and after voting day itself. In this session, you will look at disability inclusion in the electoral cycle as a whole.

PowerPoint slide 45

Comprehensive data on **the political participation of people with disabilities is lacking**, but you can share the following[2]:

- 67 per cent of countries have legal restrictions on the right to vote for people with disabilities, and 91 per cent restrict eligibility to stand for election. The majority of voting exclusions and candidacy restrictions specifically target people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities
- About 30 per cent of people with disabilities find voting problematic or not accessible for them
- Across 25 countries, only three per cent of people who work as legislators, senior officials or managers are people with disabilities

PowerPoint slide 46

Describe the cycle. Show the **electoral cycle** graphic[3]. The electoral cycle is made up of different steps and actions in which there are a range of opportunities to strengthen the participation of people with disabilities.

Here you can see that the electoral process is a continuous cycle of stages (pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral) with different actions involved in each. Elections are not a one-off event that is over in a day. Once one election is complete, the process towards the next election can begin. All stages of the electoral cycle are very important, and there are opportunities for improving disability inclusion at all stages.

PowerPoint slide 47

Group work: gallery walk

1. Separate participants into three groups. Give each group a piece of flipchart paper and markers. They can tape the paper to the walls in different corners of the room or place them on different tables.
2. Assign each group a stage of the electoral cycle ('pre-electoral period', 'electoral period' and 'post-electoral period') and ask them to put their stage as the title of their flipchart.
3. Ask participations to list on their flipchart some examples of actions that could be taken at their stage of the electoral cycle to improve the participation of people with disabilities. Remind them to consider different types of impairments.
4. Allow the groups 10 minutes for this exercise, then swap the groups to another stage of the electoral cycle, spending 10 minutes per each stage of the cycle (30 minutes in total). They could either rotate by going to the flipchart of the other group or could remain seated, and you can change over the flipcharts for them.
5. When they receive the flipchart of the previous group, they should first look at what the group has written and add a tick symbol to any ideas that stand out as really strong. They then should add any new ideas to the list.
6. When all groups have completed each of the three stages, ask each group to present the stage they worked on last. They should share what is listed on their flipchart paper and highlight which of the points received ticks.

Consider:

- Were there any recommendations for the participation of people with disabilities in the electoral cycle that we were not familiar with before?
- What did we learn from this activity about the priority actions for inclusion in electoral processes?

PowerPoint slide 48-50

List some of the global examples of disability inclusion at each stage of the electoral cycle from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and National Democratic Institute (NDI) guide 'Equal Access: How to Include Persons with Disabilities in Elections and Political Processes'. The list may contain some ideas that the groups did not already come up with.

Ask the group:

- Do you think any of these ideas are already happening in your context?
- Are there any areas that need to be actioned for improving the participation of people with disabilities in elections?

10-minute energiser opportunity

Session 8: Universal accessibility and elections

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, plenary discussion
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers
What is this session for?	An overview of universal accessibility
What will it help you achieve?	To apply the seven principles of universal accessibility to accessibility audit reports

Preparing for this session

Materials

The seven principles of universal accessibility are discussed at length in this session, both by the facilitator and in plenary. It may be useful to give participants with visual impairments a braille/large-print version of this list so they can engage fully with the conversation.

Contextualisation

You will need to prepare a context-specific example of universal accessibility and add it to slide 57, which has been left blank for this purpose.

PowerPoint slides script

51-57

PowerPoint slide 51

Now we will briefly discuss the concept of universal accessibility and its importance in inclusive elections.

PowerPoint slide 52

Share the international definition of accessibility.

PowerPoint slide 53

Share the definition of universal accessibility. Ask participants to start thinking to themselves about how the concept of universal accessibility could apply to the whole election period and voting in a polling station itself.

PowerPoint slide 54

Share the **seven principles of universal accessibility**. These are adapted from the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design and were developed in 1997 by a group of architects, product designers, engineers and

environmental design researchers. The aim of these seven principles is to guide how environments, products and communications are designed.

Talk through how each of these principles is key for accessibility for people with disabilities. If electoral processes are not designed with universal accessibility considered, then there is a significant risk that certain groups, including people with disabilities, may not be able to fully and equally participate in elections.

PowerPoint slide 55

Group discussion

Lead participants in a plenary discussion about how the seven principles of universal accessibility may specifically relate to the participation of people with disabilities in elections. Go back to slide 54 and go through the principles in order, one by one. Ask the group to think of examples in electoral processes that could apply.

1. **Equity:** Promote disability inclusion and equal voting rights at all stages of an election (pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral)
2. **Flexibility:** Ensure that the physical infrastructure and location of polling stations are accessible for people with different disabilities
3. **Simple and intuitive:** Ballot papers should be clear, with visuals/images. They should avoid unnecessary and confusing information. The marking of the selected candidate should be clear and intuitive for all voters
4. **Access to information for all:** Produce voter education materials in accessible formats (visual, verbal, tactile, easy read). Give simple instructions, avoid small print, and ensure all materials are compatible with different assistive technology and devices
5. **Tolerance for error:** Ensure that polling stations are hazard free and that mechanisms for reporting complaints and issues are accessible for people with different disabilities
6. **Use requires little physical effort:** Advocate that polling stations are located close to the community with transportation access
7. **Size and space for approach and use:** Ensure space for assistive devices or personal assistance in polling booths. Ensure that people who are seated, standing and of small stature are able to access polling booths and voting urns

Wrap up the discussion, thanking everyone for their participation. Share that the principles of universal design have informed the elements of the voting accessibility audit report, and that you will explore more in the upcoming sessions.

PowerPoint slide 56

Access to information example:

Sightsavers, in partnership with Inclusion International, consulted with people with intellectual disabilities in Cameroon who indicated that information on how to vote was not accessible to them.

With people with intellectual disabilities, we co-designed easy-to-understand information tools on voting rights and how to vote, and shared these to enhance inclusive electoral participation. The tools are available here: https://www.sightsavers.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Sightsavers-Cameroon-inclusion-guides-English.zip

---

PowerPoint slide 57

Here, you can show the group the example of universal accessibility relevant to your context that you prepared in advance.

Session 9: International and national legal frameworks

Duration	45 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group work
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers, tape or Blu Tack
What is this session for?	To look at how legal and policy frameworks guide our inclusive election work
What will it help you achieve?	To deliver policy and legislation commitments on the ground regarding inclusive elections

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

Slides 63 to 66 on national legal and policy frameworks will need to be adapted to your specific context. It is important to review and be familiar with the national electoral legal and policy frameworks prior to rolling out the training, as efforts to promote accessible voting for people with disabilities must consider this. Legislation and policies can change so it is important to keep the information in these slides up to date. Also, have to hand information on when your country signed and ratified the UNCRPD (the example here on slide 59 is for Tanzania).

PowerPoint slides script

58-68

PowerPoint slide 58

This session provides an overview of international and national legal frameworks regarding the voting rights of people with disabilities. It is important to understand the legal and policy frameworks that guide our inclusive election work.

It is also crucial to know the commitment to accessibility in voting so our polling station audits can help to better understand how policy and legislation commitments are being delivered on the ground and equal rights upheld.

You may wish to engage with legal and policy experts to provide this session if available.

PowerPoint slide 59

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is an international human rights treaty that entered into force in 2008. The CRPD describes the rights of people with disabilities in many areas, including education, employment, health, justice and political participation. The

CRPD is legally binding. This means that when a state ratifies the convention, they commit to upholding the rights and obligations contained within it. It requires governments to develop and put into force policies, legislation and programmes to promote the rights of people with disabilities.

Localising language: Tanzania signed the convention in 2007 and ratified it in 2009 [insert your own country-specific information here].

PowerPoint slide 60

Inclusive elections and the CRPD

The convention also recognises various political rights, and includes articles relating to the equal participation of people with disabilities in elections. It outlines steps that states should take to ensure that people with disabilities can vote and be elected on an equal basis:

- **Right to vote and be elected:** Persons with disabilities must have the opportunity to vote and stand for election
- **Accessible voting procedures:** Voting materials and facilities must be appropriate, accessible, and easy to understand and use
- **Secret ballot protection:** The right to vote by secret ballot must be protected, without intimidation
- **Use of assistive technologies:** States should facilitate the use of assistive and new technologies to support participation
- **Assistance in voting:** Where necessary, persons with disabilities should be allowed to receive assistance from a person of their choice

PowerPoint slide 61

There are other articles in the CRPD that are important to consider when it comes to disability-inclusive elections.

- **Article 9** covers accessibility, including of services, facilities and information. This is important when it comes to accessible voter information, such as how people are informed about registering to vote or what to do on voting day
- **Article 12** focuses on legal capacity, an issue that often affects the legal right to vote of people with intellectual disabilities. This article requires governments to ensure that "persons with disabilities have the right to recognition everywhere as persons before the law," and they are allowed support in exercising these rights. This means that legislation that limits people with disabilities' legal right to vote based on legal capacity is in contradiction with the CRPD

PowerPoint slide 62-68

National legal and policy frameworks: The information on these slides relates to Tanzania. It is worth showing this to the groups as an example of policy from another country, then sharing some examples in your own context. You can input this context-specific information into slide 66, which has been left blank.

Contextualising policy: Here you will outline the main national legal and policy frameworks related to inclusive elections in Tanzania. Provide the main points on inclusive elections from:

- The Tanzania Constitution
- The Disability Action 2010
- The National Election Act

PowerPoint slide 67

Group work

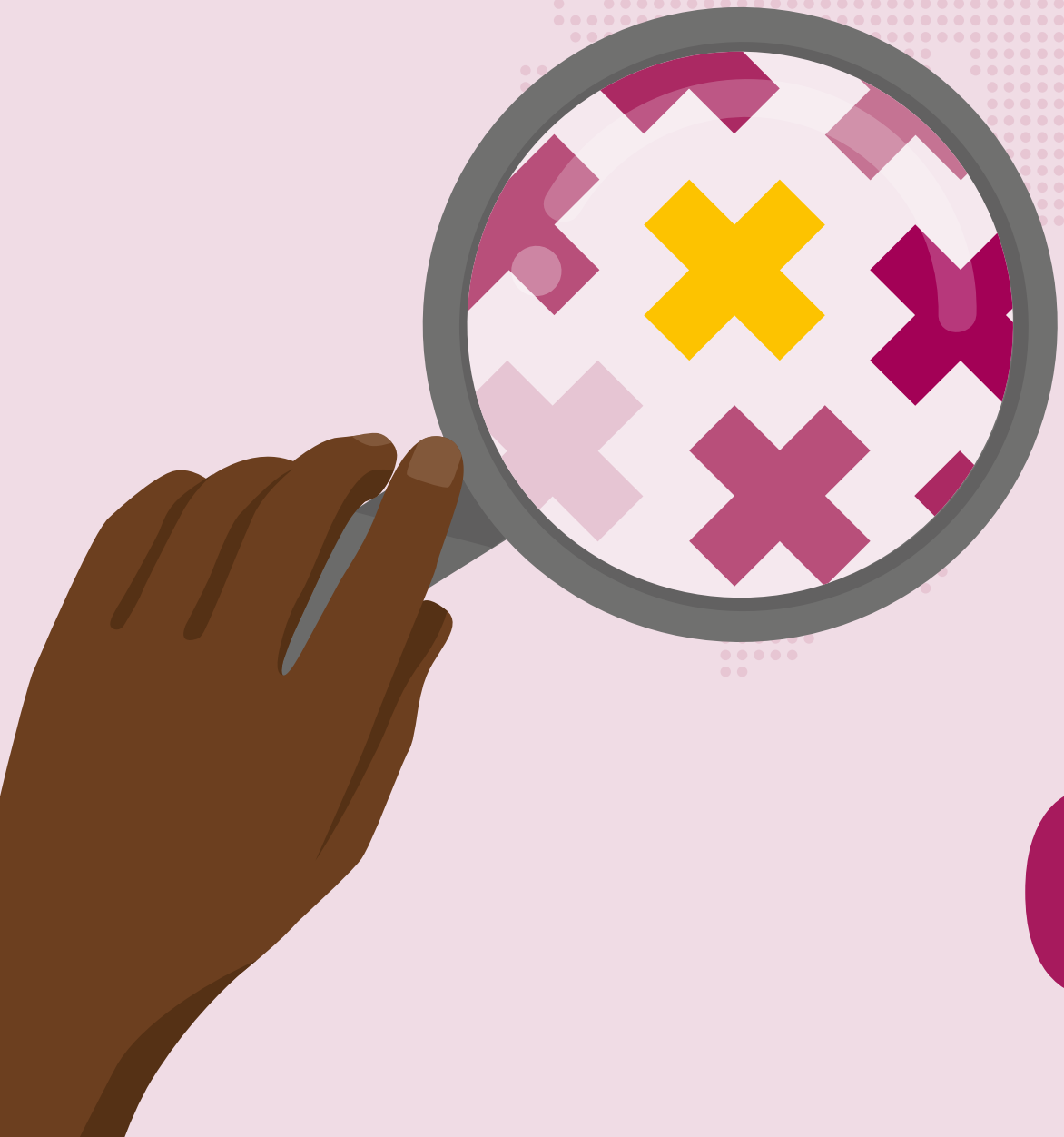
1. Divide participants into small groups and provide them with flipchart sheets and markers.
2. Ask them to consider in their groups the commitments in the international and national legal frameworks. Can they think of any key gaps in the realisation of legalisation and policy commitments when it comes to disability-inclusive elections?
3. What are some of the reasons why the commitments might not be happening in practice?
4. In their groups, ask them to write their thoughts on their sheets.
5. After five minutes, participants are invited to sit again in plenary and share the key gaps they identified. Thank participants for their contributions, and invite them to reflect on the definitions presented, identifying similarities and differences.

PowerPoint slide 68

You can now show the group some of the key gaps identified. Compare them against the views of the group and highlight if they have identified anything new.

End of day one

Identifying barriers and sharing best practice



03

Session 10: Identifying barriers and sharing best practice

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Group activity, plenary discussion
Resources	Slides, Game of Life cards
What is this session for?	To take part in an activity that showcases the first-hand experiences of people with disabilities
What will it help you achieve?	To understand the importance of allowing people with disabilities be involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives

Preparing for this session

Materials

Print out the Game of Life character profile cards. Ensure that accessible character cards are also available to those who need them.

Facilitation

It is important that all groups perform the Game of Life activity at the same time, so you may need to assign one facilitator per group. It may be necessary to prepare some extra assistants for this session.

PowerPoint slides script

69-71

PowerPoint slide 69

The slide shows that we have now moved on to part three of the training.

PowerPoint slide 70

Group activity

1. Divide participants into five groups and invite them to take part in the Game of Life.
2. Distribute one character profile card to each group, explaining that they will need to identify with their character during the activity. Each character profile includes a picture of the character, along with their name, gender, disability and socioeconomic status.

PowerPoint slide 71

3. Show the whole group the five character profiles on the screen.
4. Invite each group to select a volunteer who will represent their character. Ask volunteers to stand in line in the middle of the room, facing the same direction.

5. Explain that you, the facilitator, will now read aloud a life story which takes the characters on a journey from birth to old age. At each significant life event, each group will need to think how their character will be impacted. They will have a few moments to discuss and identify possible barriers that their character may face.
6. Emphasise that groups must focus on what they think is the reality of the situation for those individuals in the actual context on the ground – not what they think is morally right, or what would be the ideal scenario.
7. Based on the consensus within their respective groups, at each life event the volunteers will need to take one step forward for a positive or successful experience, or one step backward for a negative or unsuccessful experience.
8. Explain that volunteers themselves are not allowed to participate in the discussion. Their task is simply to follow the instructions of their group members.
9. Ask whether anyone has any questions, and make sure everyone is ready to start the activity. Pause for a few seconds in silence, allowing participants to concentrate and enter the right mood. Using a soft and calm voice, start reading the following story.

Game of Life story

1. One fine day, after a long wait of nine months, your character is born. How does your family feel when they see who you are? Think about their reactions and make your moves.
2. Now you are a bit older. Most children your age are attending school full time. How likely is it that you will be able to attend school regularly and achieve similar learning outcomes to the other children? Think about any barriers you may face and make your moves.
3. You are now a teenager. A lot of people in your age group go out regularly to socialise with their friendship group. Will this be a possibility for you? Think about any barriers you may face and make your moves.
4. You are 20. You want to make some money for your family and do something to support your community. You try to get a paid job in a local business. How easy will it be for you to find a job? Think about barriers and make your moves.
5. You are in your 30s. The national elections are coming up. You have never voted before and need to register to do so. Also, the polling station is quite far from your house and always very busy. How likely is it that you would register to vote, and vote in the election? Think about barriers and make your moves.
6. You are in your 40s. Local authorities are holding community consultation meetings to inform local development plans and budgets. How likely is it that you will be able to meaningfully participate in these meetings and have your voice heard? Think about barriers and make your moves.
7. You are in your 50s. You are interested in local politics and are a member of a political party. You would like to put your name forward to be a local councillor candidate. How likely is it that you will be selected by the political party and win the election? Think about barriers and make your moves.

10. At the end of the activity, it is likely that the volunteers representing the different characters will be in different parts of the room: some of them will have advanced a lot, while others may be near their starting position – or even behind.
11. Ask the volunteers to remain where they are, and ask them to observe the position of all the other characters. Now you can ask the following questions – starting from the character who is most behind:
    - How do you feel?
    - Did you agree with the decisions that were taken for you?
    - Would you have made different choices?

As volunteers were not able to influence their own lives and had to follow instructions from the groups, they will likely express frustration. Explain to the group that the motto of the disability movement is **'Nothing About Us Without Us'** and highlight how important it is to include people with disabilities in decisions that impact them. This means removing barriers to participating in decision-making, such as voting.

Now invite other participants to share their reflections and feelings. As part of this reflection, facilitators can point out specific dynamics related to the intersection of disability gender and socioeconomic status.

Guide the discussion using questions such as:

- Why did a certain character remain behind?
- Was it mostly because of their disability?
- What about their gender?

At the end of the group reflection, remind participants that this was just an exercise. The outcomes of the activity are based on the assumptions made by each group and are not representative of the real experiences of all people with disabilities. So not all people who have similar characteristics of the game's characters will experience the same outcomes in life. The purpose of the activity was just to enable participants to reflect on potential barriers experienced by people with disabilities in participating as active citizens and claiming their rights – and the interplay of different identities and individual factors.

Close the activity by thanking all the participants and inviting them to take their seats.

Session 11: Barriers to participating in elections

Duration	45 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group work
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers, tape or Blu Tack
What is this session for?	To look at the various barriers faced by people with disabilities in relation to accessible voting
What will it help you achieve?	To better understand the myriad barriers faced by people with disabilities, alongside intersecting additional discrimination

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

For the group work section, it is useful to have prepared some examples of disability-inclusive voting initiatives from other countries, to compare with those of your setting.

PowerPoint slides script

72-76

PowerPoint slide 72

People with disabilities face multiple barriers to participating in elections, from voting to standing as candidates.

The barriers they face, specifically relating to accessible voting, can be grouped as follows:

PowerPoint slide 73

- Describe the image. **Attitudinal barriers,** which are discriminatory attitudes and perceptions towards people with disabilities
- **Communication barriers** occur when formats or methods of sharing information are not accessible, such as a lack of sign language interpretation
- **Environmental barriers,** such as a lack of ramps into a building, lack of accessible communications, inaccessible voting booths and no priority queuing system
- **Institutional barriers,** such as electoral policies that do not recognise people with disabilities as equal citizens or do not recognise their legal capacity or right to decide for themselves

Women with disabilities often experience multiple layers of discrimination on the grounds of their disability and their gender. In fact, they can be discriminated against by both men and women without disabilities because of their impairments, while still experiencing discrimination due to their gender and their existence in a patriarchal society.

PowerPoint slide 74

Group work

1. Divide the participants into four or five groups. Give them a flipchart and markers.
2. Ask each group to divide the flipchart page into four, making a section for each barrier (attitudinal, communication, environmental, institutional).
3. Ask the groups to discuss between themselves and list some examples of the barriers that people with disabilities face when they vote, specific to their country or region's context.
4. Encourage them to think about specific barriers for people with different types of impairment, different ages/genders, and from different social settings.
5. Allow the groups 10 to 15 minutes to discuss, and then come back and share in plenary.

PowerPoint slide 75-76

These slides provides some examples of the different types of barriers, which are taken from the **Election Access Observation Toolkit** by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), 2018.

Ask the group what they think of this information. What are their reactions?

30-minute break

Session 12: Good practices for voting accessibility

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, plenary discussion
Resources	Slides
What is this session for?	To discuss and share good practice around voting accessibility, based on personal experience
What will it help you achieve?	To learn tangible ways of improving voter accessibility within your context

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

Prepare some recent examples of steps taken to improve voting accessibility in your own country. It is important to show examples of actions that have been taken and **had a result**, not just commitments or potential actions.

PowerPoint slides script

77-83

PowerPoint slide 77-78

Now it is time to share some examples of ways that an inclusive atmosphere and improved **accessibility at polling stations** can be achieved.

The principles of non-discrimination, respect, fairness, empathy and privacy are crucial to all efforts looking at improving polling station accessibility for people with disabilities.

PowerPoint slide 79

This slide shows four **images of voting best practice** for people with different disabilities. Ask participants to contribute their own experiences.

The images are (from top left clockwise):

- Providing braille/tactile voting ballots to support voters with visual impairments
- Ramps to polling booths to support voters with physical disabilities
- Information and awareness materials for voters in easy-to-understand formats that explain voting rights and accommodations for people with intellectual disabilities
- Ballot boxes that are placed lower down to be more accessible for people with physical disabilities, such as wheelchair users and people of short stature

PowerPoint slide 80

Women and young people with disabilities

When looking at inclusion in elections, it is important to consider the intersection of gender and age. Women and young people with disabilities can face specific barriers due to disability as well as their age and gender. Elections can be an opportunity to promote their inclusion in political processes, for example:

- Ensuring that election observers are women and young people with disabilities
- Consulting them on the barriers they face to participating in elections
- Engaging women and youth-led OPDs in inclusive elections initiatives and supporting them to connect with electoral management boards
- Ensuring that registration/voter communications and information targets and represents them
- Advocating that women and young people with disabilities stand as candidates, and supporting them to do so

PowerPoint slide 81

Here are some examples from different countries of efforts made to promote disability inclusion when voting.

PowerPoint slide 82

Now show the group some recent examples of steps taken to improve voting accessibility in your own specific context, which you will have prepared ahead of this session. It is important to show examples of actions that have been taken and had a result, not just commitments or potential actions.

PowerPoint slide 83

Good practice sharing

Now invite participants to share their own positive experiences and good practices when it comes to accessible voting for people with disabilities. This can help to inspire others, encourage peer learning and showcase good practice.

The sharing of good practices activity can take one of two formats, depending on your context:

1. **Pre-plan participants to present.** If you are aware that some participants may already have worked on good practices when it comes to inclusion, you can reach out to them before the training to invite them to present. They can prepare short five-minute presentations (maximum of three slides) under the headings of: 1). What you did, 2) What you learnt, and 3) Tips for others wanting to do this too. A maximum of two presentations, ideally highlighting different types of good practices, is best.
2. **Invite participants in the room to share.** If the above is not possible, simply ask the group to share some good practices they have seen or had positive experiences of while voting.

You should encourage interaction and peer learning as much as possible for this session, so allow participants to ask questions to each other.

Steps for carrying out a voting accessibility audit

04

Session 13: Overview of the voting accessibility audit

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Presentation
Resources	Slides
What is this session for?	To share examples of disability-inclusive initiatives taking place in your context
What will it help you achieve?	To identify gaps in disability-inclusive initiatives taking place in your context and how to address them

Preparing for part four

Setting up a mock polling station

In part four, you will practise the steps of conducting a voting accessibility audit. You will need to set up a mock polling station to do this. It can be in a separate room or at the back of the main training room. If you have enough space, set up more than one so everyone can take part in the activities.

The mock polling station must have a voting booth, a ballot box and tables on which to place ballot papers and envelopes. It should resemble the polling stations on the ground.

Mock polling station(s) will be crucial in the activities of Session 16 and Session 18.

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

For this session, you will need to identify disability-inclusive initiatives taking place in your context for inclusive elections. If your context has only one existing initiative, such as this training, use examples from other contexts.

The twin-tracked approach to election observation boxes on page 49-50 will help you to explain examples of each type.

Within your context, think about how short-term observations can lead to long-term observations and mainstreaming. It's important to understand this fully before giving the information to participants and answering questions.

PowerPoint slides script

84-89

PowerPoint slide 84-86

Now we will look at the **process of conducting a voting accessibility audit**. This is a key method for identifying ways of strengthening disability inclusion in elections. The voting accessibility audit is an election observation activity that happens during the election stage of the electoral cycle. Disability inclusion in election observation can entail accrediting observers with disabilities and including questions on election access in observation checklists. You can share with participants how the audits fit within wider observation frameworks.

PowerPoint slide 87

- **OPDs should actively observe inclusion in elections** and engage with management bodies to take an active role in doing so
- **Observation according to disability rights frameworks**. Elections are observed according to national legislation and international standards. It is important to consider how disability rights frameworks are adhered to in the way that election processes take place
- **People with disabilities should be accredited as observers**. This could be either as part of OPDs or as part of other national or international observers
- **Twin-tracked approach to observation: standalone and mainstreaming**. It is important to consider both approaches to election observation:
  - **Standalone** observations focus on election access for people with disabilities. They may be conducted by OPDs, national or international civil society groups. For a standalone observation, checklists only include questions on accessibility and inclusion, to provide more focused analysis
  - A **mainstreaming** approach is when disability access is included in election observation checklists and collected alongside other data related to wider electoral standards and principles
- **Long- and short-term observations**
  - **Long-term observations** start before voting day and include a more in-depth analysis of the electoral process. They can include the voter registration period, a review of the legal framework, dispute resolution processes, practices of the electoral management board, political campaigns and other activities. They take place over the course of the whole electoral cycle
  - **Short-term observations** take place on voting day. Observer groups go to polling stations and speak with voters, candidate or party proxies, observers and election officials to determine whether people with disabilities had access to vote

Explain that this training focuses on **standalone short-term observation**, but it is important to reflect upon how mainstreaming and longer-term observation could also be reached.

PowerPoint slide 88

Group discussion

Examples of disability-inclusive initiatives you prepared will now be used for a group activity.

1. Ask participants to name disability-inclusive initiatives taking place in their context. Read out some examples you prepared.
2. Ask them to discuss whether they are short- or long-term, standalone or mainstreaming.
3. Show the group slide 89 for some examples they may have missed.
4. Invite participants to speak about initiatives they aware of that have not been covered.

PowerPoint slide 89

Short-term observations (standalone and mainstreaming)

	Standalone	Mainstreaming
Short term (observation on voting day only)	Standalone short-term observations focus exclusively on disability access and inclusion. Often carried out by OPDs or civil society groups specialising in disability rights. **Examples:** inclusive observations take place on voting day, centred on disability access; polling station accessibility audits; engagement with voters with disabilities, candidate and election officials to assess accessibility on voting day.	Mainstreamed short-term disability inclusion is integrated into wider election observation tools and collected alongside other data on electoral standards. **Examples:** inclusive voting day observation questions, collected alongside other data on electoral standards; observation organisation plans for disability inclusion in voting day operations; observation teams receive training on disability inclusion; questions on accessibility are included in general observation tools; voting day surveys ensure meaningful participation of people with disabilities.

PowerPoint slide 89

Long-term observations (standalone and mainstreaming)

	Standalone	Mainstreaming
Long term (full cycle observation across months)	Standalone long term observations involve disability specific monitoring conducted over several phases of the electoral cycle, focusing solely on accessibility/inclusion. **Examples:** disability inclusive review of electoral policy and legal frameworks; assessing accessible voter registration efforts; ensuring voter education materials and approaches are accessible; strengthening inclusion in the electoral management board's systems and procedures; reviewing accessibility and inclusion in political party campaigns; OPDs are engaged in post-election 'lessons learned' processes.	Mainstreamed long-term observations mean disability access is mainstreamed into all long-term observation processes, frameworks and reporting. **Examples:** disability inclusion is built into observation organisations' long-term planning and methodology; long-term observers are trained on disability inclusion; comprehensive reviews of electoral policy and legal frameworks analyse elements related to disability inclusion; disability-related questions embedded within all long-term observation tools; long-term surveys and stakeholder surveys ensure inclusive participation of people with disabilities; observation reports include findings and recommendations on disability inclusion; advocacy resulting from the mission includes messages on inclusion.

PowerPoint slide 90

The five main steps for the voting accessibility audit

There are five main steps for conducting an accessibility audit of polling stations. This is an election observation activity. You can remind the group of the training agenda and that over the next sessions you will be looking at how to conduct each step and sharing recommendations to promote accessibility.

Allow time for participants to ask questions on what is coming up. Clarify any doubts regarding what a voting accessibility audit is and its purpose.

Session 14: Step 1: Making maps

Duration	60 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group work
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers, voting accessibility maps template
What is this session for?	A practical session on mapping voting centres and polling stations
What will it help you achieve?	To identify barriers at voting locations for people with disabilities, and learning how to address these

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

Take or obtain photographs of a voting centre or polling station in the local area. These can be used as a guide for participants when they are creating their maps. Either print them out, or insert them into the slide deck and project them onto the screen.

You will also need to prepare by mapping your chosen polling station using the template or on a flipchart. You can refer to this when comparing it with what the participants have done.

Inform training participants that if they know which voting centre they are being assigned to, and if it is likely to be a busy one, it may be better to conduct the mapping before voting day.

PowerPoint slides script

91-93

PowerPoint slide 91

This session will help participants understand how to make accessibility maps of polling stations. This is a way of visually mapping barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities and is the first step of the voting accessibility audit.

For this activity, you will need to identify polling stations to map. This can be a polling station that participants are already familiar with, it could be one you have provided photos of or it could be fictional – in this instance, ask participants to simply imagine an example of a polling station in your context.

The aim of the activity is to map the polling stations and identify accessibility barriers for people with disabilities.

PowerPoint slide 92

Group activity

1. Divide participants into small groups. Distribute two flipchart papers per group (one for each map) plus black and coloured markers. It could be easier to organise the groups according to location so they can practise the mapping based on a voting centre that they are familiar with, otherwise they can make a fictional voting centre.
2. First, ask them to draw a map of the voting centre, from the main entrance of the premises to the polling station entrance itself. This illustration can also consider the location of the voting centre within the community.
3. On the second sheet, ask them to draw a map of the polling station, i.e. everything inside the voting room itself.
4. Ask the groups to use their coloured markers to put a cross on their maps where they have identified barriers for people with disabilities. You can also hand out the voting accessibility maps template to the groups at this point, so they can see the template that should be used to complete these maps during the election observation accessibility audit.
5. Allow the groups 15 to 20 minutes to complete this, then come back and share in a plenary. These maps help to identify barriers and show where these are, which will assist in reporting and addressing them.

PowerPoint slide 93

Finish the exercise by showing some examples of mapped locations and rooms.

60-minute lunch

Session 15: Step 2: Taking photos

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, plenary discussion
Resources	Slides
What is this session for?	Guidelines on how to take photos at voting centres to demonstrate barriers for people with disabilities
What will it help you achieve?	To better understand the ethics of photo-taking and the process of informed consent

Preparing for this session

Contextualisation

Prepare and provide some guidelines, based on your own context/setting, on how you as facilitators will decide whether the taking of photographs on voting day is appropriate or not. Provide relevant country-specific GDPR guidelines as well as details on what type of device these photos should be taken.

PowerPoint slides script

94-96

PowerPoint slide 94

Explain that this session will give participants guidance on how to take photos when conducting voting accessibility audits.

PowerPoint slide 95

Guidance on taking photos

Taking photos can help to demonstrate the barriers more clearly, as well as good practices in accessibility. They can be included in the voting accessibility audit report as evidence and to help visualise the findings.

It is crucial to consider ethical approaches to taking photos and to always put safety, non-discrimination and respect first. The decision as to whether or not a participant should take photos must be taken by management in that person's organisation. They would need to consult electoral authorities and check election observation guidelines. It is also good practice to check with other impartial observation organisations to hear of their experiences with photos.

Go through the guidance in the slide for taking photos, and answer any questions participants may have. **If there are concerns and risks, it should be decided whether it is appropriate to take photos at all.**

Elections can be sensitive settings that require privacy. Questions around whether approval is required from elections officials and how to get this approval should be addressed. Questions around how to gain informed consent for taking photos, and how

photos will be stored and shared in a way that respects data protection, should also be addressed.

Note: the aim of taking photos is to make the voting accessibility audit report clearer. If organisations wish to generate communications content around the election, this should be conducted separately to the voting accessibility audit.

PowerPoint slide 96

This slide shows four images of barriers that different people with disabilities face when voting. They are good examples of photos that could be captured when conducting the voting accessibility audit. They are (from top left clockwise):

- Small print and a lot of information on ballot papers can be barriers for people with visual and intellectual impairments
- Voting booths that are not accessible may affect independent and private voting, such as for people with different physical disabilities
- Long waiting lines in the sun can be a barrier for people with many types of disabilities, including physical disabilities and people with albinism. Take note if there is no priority queuing system for people with disabilities and other needs
- Polling stations without ramps are barriers for people with physical disabilities

Photos can be annexed to the voting accessibility audit checklist to show examples and identify issues that need to be addressed.

Ask the group what they think they might capture using photos taken at the polling station. Are there any foreseen challenges when it comes to taking photos?

PowerPoint slide 97

Add photos to this slide of local polling stations and share thoughts about needs

Session 16: Step 3: Completing the checklist

Duration	60 minutes
Methodology	Work in pairs, plenary
Resources	Slides, voting accessibility checklist handout
What is this session for?	A practical run-through of completing the voting accessibility checklist
What will it help you achieve?	Know-how and confidence to complete the checklist on voting day itself

Preparing for this session

Materials

You will be distributing the voting accessibility checklist to each participant during this session. Print out copies for those who can read and fill them in, and ensure accessible formats are available.

Contextualisation

You may need to contextualise this checklist depending on your setting, as assistive voting can differ depending on electoral policies and procedures. Take, for example, question E2: if tactile ballot guides or ballot marking guides are not part of the electoral procedures in your setting, and are not provided for nationally in your context, you can remove that question.

Adaptation of the checklist may be best done with a smaller group of experienced OPD/CSO leads in advance of this session.

PowerPoint slides script

98-99

PowerPoint slide 98

In this session, participants will practise how to complete the voting accessibility checklist on voting day. The checklist is the main tool of the voting accessibility audit, so plenty of time and space should be dedicated to this session. Ask the group if they would like a quick break to boost their energy levels.

Distribute the voting accessibility checklist to the group (accessible formats should be provided) and allow 10 minutes for everyone to read it. You can allow more time if needed.

PowerPoint slide 99

10-minute energiser opportunity

Group activity

1. Divide participants into pairs. Ensure each person has a blank checklist to complete. Emphasise that all sections must be completed (yes/no), but also that they must give details, explaining what they see and justifying their responses.
2. If possible, ask the group to take photos of the most significant obstacles. Equipment could be used to test what is and isn't possible for those in a wheelchair, using walking sticks, those with lack of vision, for example.
3. Important: the checklist must be completed based on the reality on the ground, not on assumptions or by anticipating what might happen on the day.
4. Allow participants 30 minutes to complete the checklist before coming back together to discuss.
5. In plenary, ask the group:
   - Were all the points clear?
   - Can all these points be checked on voting day itself?

Session 17: Step 4: Carrying out surveys

Duration	60 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, work in pairs, plenary
Resources	Slides, voting accessibility survey handout
What is this session for?	Practical run-through of how to conduct post-vote surveys with people with disabilities
What will it help you achieve?	Skills to carry out the survey correctly and to accurately capture any barriers that may be considered not inclusive for people with disabilities

Preparing for this session

Materials

You will be distributing the voting accessibility survey to each participant during this session. Print out copies for those who can read them, and ensure accessible formats are available.

Contextualisation

This survey will need to be contextualised ahead of training. Definitions of impairment type may vary according to your context and underpinning legal and policy frameworks, so may need to be updated.

The presence of security personnel may not be a common feature, so please review or remove this question accordingly.

How the data will be stored and managed may also differ between contexts, so please adapt the wording to reflect your context's process of data storage.

Facilitation

You will need to guide participants on what type of electoral voters to survey (see the bullet points on page 59). Consider providing the minimum percentage of surveys to be conducted with women with disabilities. This should be decided in advance and incorporated as guidance.

PowerPoint slides script
100-102

PowerPoint slide 100

In this session, participants will review the survey tool and understand how to conduct post-vote surveys with people with disabilities on voting day.

The focus of the survey is to capture barriers that were not visible in the checklist, such as those related to attitudes. It is an important tool of the accessibility audit, as it ensures that the voices of voters with disabilities are reflected.

Hand out the voting accessibility survey tool and allow time for participants to read it, ask questions or for clarification, and provide any feedback. It is important to note down any suggestions as you may want to incorporate them into the final version of the survey tool you use on voting day.

PowerPoint slide 101

Group work: role play

1. Divide participants into pairs: one will role play as an interviewer, the other as a voter with disabilities. Ensure that different impairments, ages, genders and locations are represented.
2. Ask the group to imagine that those playing the people with disabilities have just voted. As they exit the polling station, are asked by interviewers to complete a survey with them.
3. Allow the groups 20 minutes to complete the surveys in pairs, then come back together to discuss the following in plenary:
   - Ask the interviewees and interviewers how the experience was for them
   - Ask some of the interviewers to share what the main findings were in terms of the experiences of people with disabilities and the barriers for them

Remind participants of the basic principles of the survey: the person with a disability can be seated, there is no audience (confidentiality), no rushing, and permission is sought before starting the survey.

Remind the participants that we are looking to capture the obstacles linked to **attitudes** because these are not included in the checklist.

PowerPoint slide 102

Share some guidance on how to conduct surveys.

- Surveys must be conducted under the right conditions. Ask for informed consent from the interviewee, invite them to sit down, respect their privacy (no audience), and give them time to express themselves. Interviewees may wish to have a support person present
- Ensure diversity is reflected. Aim to survey women and men of different ages and with different impairment types, and from different locations
- Suggestions from interviewees about how accessibility can be improved should be fully recorded (see 'Collecting suggestions' below)

After sharing this slide, ask the group if they have any questions or concerns regarding the process of conducting the surveys.

Collecting suggestions

Suggestions for adaptations to the survey tool should be collected by the facilitator during training. Ask participants to read through their suggestions, either individually or in groups, while you write down in a notebook (ie not on a visible flipchart) any questions or recommendations. You should first see if other groups can respond to those suggestions with questions or recommendations themselves, as it encourages them to think through the answers and tools without your guidance.

Discuss with the management and/or technical teams after the training what to do with the suggested adaptations to the survey tool. They will need to decide what is best or possible for the context.

End of day two

Session 18: Voting accessibility audit simulation

Duration	60 minutes
Methodology	Group simulation activity
Resources	Mock polling station, voting accessibility checklist handout, voting accessibility survey handout
What is this session for?	A practical activity that accurately simulates the taking of the accessibility audit on voting day
What will it help you achieve?	Real experience of what to expect and how to carry out the task

Preparing for this session

Facilitation

Ensure your mock polling station is ready for this session's role play, and make sure the group still has their handouts.

PowerPoint slides script

103

PowerPoint slide 103

Simulation activity

The principle of this activity is to simulate a voting accessibility audit as it would be in a polling station, and will help to complete the voting accessibility checklist on voting day. You will need the mock polling station(s) set up to conduct it.

Group work

1. Either as a whole group or in multiple groups, depending on the number of participants and how many mock polling stations you have space for, distribute the following roles to the participants and explain the principles of the activity.

- One reception/security officer positioned outside the entrance to the polling station. Their role is to welcome and help the person with a disability to enter the polling station. This actor is caring
- One guidance officer placed in the polling station. Their role is to direct and help, if necessary, the person with a disability to vote. This actor helps a little, but without much enthusiasm
- One presiding officer seated with the registrars, behind the ballot box. This actor is rude, disrespectful and in a hurry
- Two interviewers outside the polling station with four blank questionnaires

- Four people with disabilities. Make sure that different impairments are represented. The actors enter one by one, and each experiences the vote in turn
- Two neutral observers taking notes

2. The actors should play their roles while the two neutral observers complete the checklist and the interviewers conduct the survey. In a real-time accessibility audit, the same observers can complete both the checklist and surveys; but for the purpose of time we have divided this up in the role play.
3. When the simulations are complete, bring everyone back into plenary.
4. Ask the group to discuss their checklist results and talk about the experience.
   - For everyone, how was your experience? How did you feel?
   - For the role of the observers, how did they feel? Was it difficult or not to observe? What did they notice for accessibility?
   - For the role of the interviewees, how did they feel? Was it difficult to ask any of the questions and get feedback? What did they notice for accessibility?
   - What did we learn from this simulation that we can put into practice when we do our election observation?
   - Any other challenges, ideas or feedback you would like to share?

30-minute break

Session 19: Step 5: Making recommendations

Duration	60 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group work, plenary
Resources	Slides, voting accessibility recommendations template
What is this session for?	To learn how to make recommendations using data collected from maps, checklists and surveys
What will it help you achieve?	To make practical recommendations based on your context, and which stakeholders to elevate them to

Preparing for this session

Materials

You will be distributing the voting accessibility recommendations template to each participant during this session. Print out copies for those who can read them, and ensure accessible formats are available.

Contextualisation

You may need to contextualise this template. You may be conducting large-scale observations in a busy environment or as part of a mainstreaming observation where you have a lot of commitments, therefore it might not be feasible to provide recommendations for every question on the checklist. Focus on providing only the top five priorities, then use the open space for any other recommendations, rather than completing a recommendation for each question.

Prepare sample stakeholder lists relevant to your context for the stakeholder map activity. Consider electoral management bodies (EMBs); ministries, departments and agencies with disability-inclusion mandates; OPDs; CSOs; political parties, the media, voters with disabilities and other observers (both local and international).

PowerPoint slides script
104-105

PowerPoint slide 104

This session will help participants understand how to make recommendations using data they have collected from the maps, checklist and survey tools.

Reminder: the aim of the voting accessibility audits is to gather information on the barriers that prevent people with disabilities from being equally able to vote on voting day. Therefore, it is critical that the audit findings are effectively communicated to the key stakeholders responsible for ensuring inclusive election participation.

It is important to first know who the main stakeholders will be. You can conduct stakeholder mapping prior to implementing the voting accessibility audit. It is important to engage them early and ensure they are aware of the disability-inclusive election monitoring that will take place – and what its purpose is.

PowerPoint slide 105

Group activity

1. Divide participants into the same groups as the previous session's simulation.
2. Distribute the voting accessibility recommendations template. Each group will fill in the table of recommendations. They should consider the questions in the checklist that have been marked with a "no", as well as any key barriers and recommendations from the surveys. The numbers from the checklist questions must correspond to each recommendation (e.g. A.1 is 'are the centre's access roads clear?').
3. Once they have completed the table of all recommendations related to the checklist, participants should agree on the top five priority recommendations. These priority recommendations should also consider findings from the surveys.
4. Allow the participants 30 minutes to complete the tables. You may want to check in with them at around 20 minutes to make sure they have time to move on to the top five priorities.
5. Bring participants back into plenary. As each group presents their top five priorities, summarise each on the flipchart. In a whole group plenary discussion, ask participants:
   - Why did they select these priorities?
   - What were the common recommendations between the groups?
   - Who are the main stakeholders responsible for implementing the recommendations?
   - What would be the best way to communicate the results and recommendations of the voting accessible audit to these stakeholders?

Session 20: Planning audits and reporting

Duration	60 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group work
Resources	Slides, flipchart, markers, tape or Blu Tack
What is this session for?	To form a clear plan to conduct audits on voting day
What will it help you achieve?	To build confidence and awareness on how to conduct the audit and who to disseminate your collected information to

Preparing for this session

Materials

You will be sharing the voting accessibility audit report template in this session. Ensure you have enough printed out for everyone, and that it's available in accessible formats.

Contextualisation

It is important to plan how the voting accessibility audit will be conducted. Take into consideration the tools and methods that will need to be adapted for your context.

The tools may also need to be translated, to consider any specific requirements from the election management body, and ensure accessibility.

Be aware whether the accessibility audits will be conducted, stored and disseminated using paper or digital resources.

Look at previous examples of disability inclusion in your context to share with the group alongside slide 106: studies on disability-inclusive elections, any disability-related findings and recommendations from previous election observation reports.

Facilitation

Before training, facilitators must determine whether participants are accredited observers, or whether accreditation is yet to be decided.

PowerPoint slides script
106-109

PowerPoint slide 106

This session will help participants formulate a clear plan for conducting the accessibility audits on voting day, and learn how to complete the audit reports.

PowerPoint slide 107

Preparing before voting day

Present information from the slide on what should be done ahead of voting day to conduct the audits. Share with the group some context-specific information you have prepared (see prep box on page 64). It is important that the election observers have the required government accreditation, so facilitators will need to seek relevant government approvals before assigning observers to individual polling stations.

When adapting the tools, you may want to involve your monitoring and evaluation teams for guidance on how best to collect and store the accessibility audit data. For example, some teams may prefer to use online tools or platforms to collect and analyse the data, which will be helpful when it comes to writing the audit report.

Ask participants if they have any questions or need any clarification.

PowerPoint slide 108

Carrying out the audit on voting day

This slide demonstrates how the audits could be carried out in each polling station. It gives an idea of how many of each of the tools should be completed for the different steps of the audit. You can contextualise this slide to your specific needs. It is important that the questionnaires reflect diversity; for example, you may want to consider requiring a minimum percentage or number of the surveys to be conducted with women with disabilities. Ask participants if they have any questions or need any clarification.

PowerPoint slide 109

Getting together after voting day

At the end of voting day, election observers in each polling station should get together and debrief. They should agree on the final checklist, maps, a maximum number of photos to share with their recommendations (such as 10 photos) and jointly create the list of recommendations to be shared.

It is important to discuss as a group how the day went. Any challenges, successes or recommendations regarding your experience as observers could be fed back to your management/technical team. The experience of conducting voting accessibility audits, as well as the experience of election observers with disabilities, is important learning to strengthen inclusion in future efforts.

Ask participants if they have any questions or need any clarification.

PowerPoint slide 110-113

Developing the audit report

The individual polling station audits, including their list of recommendations, should be shared and then incorporated into a more central report. The audit report can share general findings regarding the barriers and recommendations when it comes to disability inclusion on voting day. It can also make recommendations targeting key stakeholders more nationally or regionally. It is important to identify in advance who will develop the report and how they will analyse the results.

Here, you can share the voting accessibility audit report template with participants so they can see what is included.

Please note: the way in which the central report is created will be dependent on the context, i.e. by considering the current inclusive actions being taken during voting in your context, as well as the stakeholders the report will be shared with. You will therefore now show the group an exemplar report template tool that shows a fictitious report of a fictitious country. Participants can work through this example as a point of inspiration.

PowerPoint slide 114

Group work: planning dissemination

It is important to discuss in advance how the findings of the audit report will be shared and with whom. For disability-inclusive election observation to have an impact, it's important to identify who the key stakeholders responsible for accessible voting are, as these are the people we seek to influence through the audit.

1. Divide participants into small groups and give them each a flipchart and markers. In this activity, they will identify who they want to share the findings and recommendations of the accessibility audit with, and why. Ask them to make a table on the flipchart as seen on the slide:
   - Stakeholder name
   - Role in relation to inclusive elections
   - Rationale for sharing the audit with this stakeholder
   - How we will share the audit findings with them

This is basic stakeholder mapping to inform the dissemination of the audit's findings and recommendations. In the column on 'rationale for sharing the audit', participants should think about what actions and changes they hope the specific stakeholders will take as a result of the audit.

2. Allow the participants 15 to 20 minutes to develop their mappings, then invite them to share them in plenary.

- Which were the most important stakeholders identified and what were their roles?
- What are the best ways for sharing the audit with them?
- What needs to happen to be able to do this?

This helpful activity informs the dissemination of the audit report and also helps to build the participants' awareness regarding the key duty bearers and other stakeholders involved.

60-minute lunch

Session 21: Optional modules

Duration	2 hours
Methodology	Presentation, activities
Resources	According to the content chosen

Preparing for this session

Facilitation

Decide ahead of time whether you will be using optional modules to conduct sessions. You may wish to identify technical experts to present these additional modules. Account for this with your timings.

Content for optional modules should be identified prior to the training as part of a capacity-building needs assessment, which should be conducted into order to inform and adapt the content to the needs of the context and target participants.

PowerPoint slides script

115

PowerPoint slide 115

In this session, you have two hours to include any additional content to build the capacities of disability-inclusive election observers in your context.

Examples of optional modules that could be added to the training include:

- Orientation on official guidelines for election observers
- Orientation on the disability movement and legal framework
- Advocacy and influencing training
- Security training
- Safeguarding
- Disability-inclusive communications
- Accessible design

10-minute energiser opportunity

Session 22: Evaluation

Duration	30 minutes
Methodology	Completing the evaluation
Resources	Training feedback form
What is this session for?	To fill out the training feedback form
What will it help you achieve?	To anonymously voice your thoughts (positive or negative) on the training, and help to inform the design and delivery of future trainings.

Preparing for this session

Materials

You will be distributing the training feedback forms to each participant during this session. Print out copies for those who can read and fill them in, and ensure accessible formats are available. Have the evaluation form online link or QR code ready to share if you are using a virtual platform such as Microsoft Forms to gather feedback.

Facilitation

Support should be provided to complete the form where needed. However, to ensure open feedback, this support cannot be provided by the training facilitators, so ensure you have enlisted the help of a suitable assistant.

PowerPoint slides script

116

PowerPoint slide 116

Distribute the form and ask participants to provide feedback on the training, which will help to inform future trainings. Request that everyone is open and honest in their feedback. The feedback in the form is anonymous.

Allow 30 minutes for the forms to be completed, then collect them for analysis.

You can also put the evaluation template on an electronic online form (such as Microsoft Forms) as this could make the analysis of the feedback easier.

Session 23: Next steps, thanks and closure

Duration	15 minutes
Methodology	Presentation, group work
Resources	Slides
What is this session for?	A quick review of the training as a whole
What will it help you achieve?	To consider the main learnings of the training, and discuss what participants will confidently be able to put into practice

Preparing for this session

Prepare to outline context-specific next steps for participants.

PowerPoint slides script

117-120

PowerPoint slide 117

As training comes to an end, let the group know you will be taking some time to reflect on what everyone has learned.

PowerPoint slide 118

What have we learned?

Go around the room and ask each participant these two questions. If you don't have time for everyone, select a few volunteers, or perhaps ask those who have not shared as much during the course of the training.

- What is the main thing you have learned?
- What will you be able to put into practice?

PowerPoint slide 119

What are the next steps?

Summarise what the next steps will be for conducting the voting accessibility audit on voting day. Let participants know of any actions they need to take or information that is required from their side. Let them know how you will next contact them and when.

It can be helpful to set up a communication channel with the election observers that will conduct the disability-inclusive accessibility audits on voting day. WhatsApp groups or other platforms may be helpful so that participants can continue to ask questions and share among each other.

PowerPoint slide 120

Word of thanks and group photo

Thank everyone for their active engagement and for their commitment to promoting the right to vote and participation in elections for people with disabilities. Tell them that we hope this training will result in making election processes and systems more accessible and inclusive.

End of day three

Annexes

1. Training participation list template (facilitator use only)
2. Training agenda
3. Disability terminology handout
4. The Game of Life character cards
5. Voting accessibility maps template
6. Voting accessibility checklist
7. Voting accessibility survey
8. Voting accessibility recommendations template
9. Voting accessibility audit report template
10. Training feedback form

Helpful resources

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/crpd/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-crpd
- Equal Access: How to Include Persons with Disabilities in Elections and Political Processes – the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), November 21, 2014 https://www.ifes.org/publications/equal-access-how-include-persons-disabilities-elections-and-political-processes
- Election Access Observation Toolkit — the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) 2018 https://www.ifes.org/publications/election-access-observation-toolkit
- Guides for inclusion — Sightsavers and Inclusion International 2025. Easy-to-understand information tools on disability inclusive elections and civic participation https://www.sightsavers.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Sightsavers-Cameroon-inclusion-guides-English.zip
- Accessibility Pack for Inclusive Communications — Sightsavers, 2023 https://www.sightsavers.org/brand-book/accessibility-pack/

References

1. UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities **https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/crpd/article-29-participation-in-political-and-public-life**
2. Data from: UN DESA (2024) Disability and Development Report 2024 **https://social.desa.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/DDR2024-Full-Report-Final.pdf**
3. Adapted from: Key Issues and Risks Throughout the Electoral Cycle the Electoral Cycle, Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), April 2023 **https://www.wfd.org/what-we-do/resources/key-issues-and-risks-throughout-electoral-cycle**

YoWDO
Unlocking Hidden Potentials

UK International Development
Partnership | Progress | Prosperity

Sightsavers