



**Community Centre for the Disabled (CCD):**  
*A Resource Centre for Persons with Disabilities*

**SWOT Analysis of Disability Sector – Afghanistan**



Photo by Giovanni Diffidenti

**1392 -2013**

Funded by



**TAWANMANDI**  
Strengthening Civil Society  
in Afghanistan

**Design:** Nasem Khan Aliyar



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## **Preface**

The Advocacy Committee for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ACRPD) consists of local and international NGOs that advocate and implement different programs for persons with disabilities in the country. Community Centre for the Disabled (CCD) is one of the members of ACRPD. CCD has managed to implement different programs for persons with disabilities. The current SWOT Analysis Report in disability sector is one of its projects that has been conducted in the sector. The findings will help disability stakeholders to realize the opportunities and challenges of disability sector. It is recommended to read the report and it is our responsibility to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

Mohammad Ali Mohabati

Secretary – general of Advocacy Committee for the Right of Persons with Disabilities

## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank Tawanmandi for providing financial assistance for conducting this analysis of disability sector. The findings of the analysis would certainly contribute to promotion of persons with disability rights in the country. It will also provide baseline for measuring opportunities and weakness in disability sector for the future disability inclusive interventions.

I would also like to extend my particular gratitude to Hector J. Vivero and AID TRENDS Afghanistan team who implemented this project successfully as a consultant organization.

I also appreciate Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD), Disabled People Organizations (DPO), civil society organizations and local government authorities for their coordination and facilitative support about the analysis of disability sector.

Saifuddin Nizami  
Community Center for the Disabled (CCD)  
Executive Director

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## SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector

### i. Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AAR Japan	Association for Aid and Relief Japan
AARBAR	Afghan Amputee Bicyclist for Rehabilitation and Recreation
ABADE	Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises
AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Commission of Human Rights
ALSO	Afghan Landmine Survivor Organization
ANAB	Afghan National Association of the Blind
ANAD	Afghan National Association of the Deaf
ANDAP	Afghanistan National Disability Action Plan
ANDS	Afghanistan National Disability Strategy
AREDP	Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitation
CCD	Community Centre for the Disabled
CRPD	Convention of the Rights of People with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization / Community Service Organization
CTAP	Civilian Technical Assistance Programme
DPO	Disabled People Organization
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
FWF	Family Welfare Focus
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GoIRA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HI	Handicap International
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization



## SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector

Acronym	Description
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MofEC	Ministry of Economy
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoLSAM	Ministry of Labor Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NAPWA	National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan
NDC	National Disability Commission
NDS	National Development Strategy
NDSA	National Disability Survey of Afghanistan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
NSP	National Solidarity Program
PwD	Person with Disabilities
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office of Project Services
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
Wolisi Jirga	Committee for Disabled and Martyrs at the Parliament

## I. Executive Summary

### 1.1. Overview

Great progress in the disability sector has been made over the last couple of years. These include advancing a solid policy framework to support the empowerment of PwDs, expanding access to rehabilitation programs, facilitating access to education, and the development of a vibrant sector of organizations that actively contribute to the personal, social, and economic empowerment of PwDs.

Research findings show that there are significant strengths and opportunities that the disability sector can capitalize on to advance the rights of PwDs. However, there are also many challenges and threats ahead. Thus, it is imperative that all relevant stakeholders launch a coordinated advocacy action plan to take advantage of the strengths and opportunities while addressing the weaknesses and mitigating the threats.

At the macro-level, the primary strength identified is the strong policy framework that supports PwDs. Disability is a priority and a cross cutting issue in the Afghanistan National Compact, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment, and the National Action Plan for People with Disabilities among others. These policies are anchored by a set of International Treaties such as the United Nations Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities which was ratified by GoIRA in 2008.

Despite of the strong policy framework, research findings show that inter-ministerial coordination between different government ministries is weak. This has translated into a deficient implementation of the policy framework. Some of the reasons behind it include lack of capacity and coordination among government ministries, weak policy implementation, lack of data, and the absence of programs that support PwDs in a holistic way. In order to address these shortcomings, it is recommended that advocacy efforts focus at strengthening policy mechanisms.

Concerning opportunities, research findings show that there are significant opportunities at the policy level. It includes the expansion of formal education for PwDs if further donor support to the government is provided. Additionally, there is room to improve the implementation of policies if more collaboration between the government and CSOs is sought. If the latter increase collaboration and focus their advocacy efforts, significant gains can be made in a short period of time. To capitalize on these opportunities, it is critical that policy frameworks are streamlined and strengthened.

The largest threat at the macro-level comes from the fact that there is a weak institutional framework for policy implementation and accountability. This includes public health issues, as well as empowerment of PwDs. Thus, it is critical that advocacy efforts focus on mitigating these shortcomings as the impact that the threats can have over the disability sector is large and significant.

At the Meso-Level, research findings show that a high degree of inter-agency cooperation, as well as the diverse number of programs and mandates that cover the needs of PwDs in a comprehensive way are significant strengths. Thus, it is key that organizations capitalize on them to bolster the disability sector.

In regards to weaknesses, research findings show that local organizations have significant issues regarding the long-term sustainability of their programs, as well as limited contacts with organizations outside of the disability sector. This makes it insular undermining the organizations' ability to innovate and become self-sustainable. The latter has significant consequences for the empowerment of PwDs. It also undermines their effectiveness and limits their geographical reach.

Opportunities present at the meso-level overlap with the macro level. However, there are certain areas where synergies can be created such as facilitating access to employment opportunities. Findings show that the primary opportunity present at the meso-level for organizations is increased horizontal and vertical collaboration for the revision and implementation of programs, as well as coalition building for advocacy purposes and to improve service delivery.

Threats at the meso-level are clustered around the themes of security, changes in the regulatory framework and market trends, as well as reduction of funding. The largest threat present for organizations is potential changes in the regulatory framework followed by insecurity and changes in market trends.

Strengths at the micro-level revolve primarily around individuals who are disabled. They are the recipients of services and are also affected by policy changes. Findings show that strengths cluster around the positive impact that activities implemented by organizations bring to the lives of PwDs. These promote employment, reduce the stigma associated with disability, they increase the self-esteem of PwDs, and most importantly, they allow PwDs to achieve self-sufficiency.

In regards to weaknesses, research findings show that there are significant weakness regarding social attitudes towards women, as well as discrimination against PwDs. Additionally, donors often provide limited resources for their empowerment limiting the potential contributions PwDs can make to society as their needs are not addressed in a holistic way. This is especially true regarding mobility issues and availability of materials for the visually and hearing impaired.

Research findings show that opportunities are scarce at the micro-level. The reason is that PwDs are the primary recipients of services both from the part of the government and organizations. Thus, changes in policy and organizations can significantly expand the potential opportunities present for PwDs at the individual level.

Threats at the micro-level are clustered around the themes of economic insecurity and potential physical harm. Research findings show that the latter is due to the fact that PwDs are one of the most vulnerable groups within Afghan society. Therefore, it is critical that CSOs focus their efforts to bring the disability issue to the national agenda. In such way, mitigating strategies can be put in place to ensure that the gains of the past years are sustainable.

## 1.2 SWOT Analysis and Recommendations

### 1.2.1. Macro-level

Strengths	Recommendations
<p>I: UN Convention on the Rights for People with Disabilities has been ratified by the Afghan government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework and for the creation of a coordinating body composed by Civil Society, PwDs, and government officials to oversee implementation. The oversight body must have enforcement authority to become effective.</li> </ul>
<p>II. Article 6 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which codifies the protection of female PwDs and outlines the responsibilities of the state towards that goal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework including the creation of enforcement mechanisms to ensure that the provisions that support the empowerment PwDs are properly implemented throughout all ministries. The oversight body must have the power to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>III. Article 29 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities which codifies the public and political participation of PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework and for the creation of a coordinating body composed by Civil Society, PwDs, and government officials to oversee the implementation of provisions and programs that guarantee political participation. The oversight body must have the power to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>IV. Article 21 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities which codifies the right of PwDs to freedom of expression and access to information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework regarding access to information for PwDs including passing laws that mandate media to include programs specially designed for PwDs and to include sign language translation to ensure equal access to information.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of a coordinating body composed by Civil Society, PwDs, and government officials to oversee the implementation of provisions and programs that guarantee access to freedom of information. The oversight body must have the power to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>

<p>V. Strong International and National policy framework to support PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework and for the creation of an independent coordinating body composed by Civil Society, PwDs, and government officials to oversee implementation. The oversight body must have the power to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>VI. Nascent institutional framework to oversee progress made by PwDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the institutional framework that oversees progress made by PwDs.</li> <li>• Advocate for further inter-ministerial coordination to advance the rights of PwDs.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>VII. 3% government quota mandate to promote employment of PwDs within government institutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the proper enforcement of the 3% employment quota.</li> <li>• Advocate for the increased collaboration between CSOs and government ministries to implement awareness-raising activities for government staff to remove some of the stigmas that prevent PwDs from accessing employment in government ministries.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> <li>• Advocate for the development and implementation of regulations that force all government buildings to have the necessary infrastructure to facilitate PwDs' mobility.</li> </ul>
<p>VIII. Ongoing efforts to increase access to education for PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to increase resources for the education sector to ensure that provision and programs that facilitate PwDs access to education are implemented.</li> <li>• Advocate for the development and implementation of regulations that force all government buildings, especially schools, to have the necessary infrastructure to facilitate PwDs mobility and access.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs,</li> </ul>

	and government officials to conduct M&E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.
IX. Ongoing efforts to increase access to health for PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize targeted advocacy efforts to capitalize on the efforts of the MoPH while ensuring that the provision of prosthetic limbs, physical rehabilitation, and other services that benefit directly PwDs become one of MoPH's key operational priorities.</li> </ul>
X. The creation of units specifically designed to serve the Needs of PwDs within government agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to improve inter-ministerial coordination between units that serve the needs of PwDs following the framework outlined in NAPWA's for gender working groups to ensure that disability becomes a cross-cutting issue throughout all government ministries.</li> <li>Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
XI. Significant support from the part of donors to assist PwDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to increase dialogue with donors and other partners for the development of demand driven programs created to address the specific needs of PwDs</li> </ul>
XII. Institutional Donors are running mine awareness programs to prevent the rise in the total number of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to increase the number of mine awareness programs in the country and use mass media to increase the reach of such programs.</li> </ul>
XIII. Mine awareness have shown to be effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to increase the number of mine awareness programs in the country and use mass media to increase the reach of such programs.</li> </ul>

Weaknesses	Recommendations
I. Lack of cooperation between Ministries and NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase cooperation between NGOs, INGOs, and government ministries especially in the areas of resource sharing and capacity building.</li> <li>Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to promote cooperation between government and NGOs</li> </ul>

<p>II. Lack of human resources and technology at the ministerial and organizational to address the needs of PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an education policy that prioritizes careers that target the needs of PwDs to ensure that enough qualified professionals are available to empower PwDs. This includes physiotherapists, braille and sign language teachers, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>III. Lack of sustainable budget from the part of government agencies to strengthen the position of oversight institutions to support PwDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to increase the budget available for the empowerment of PwDs. This includes targeting the parliament during the appropriations process, the minister of finance to prioritize PwDs in their budgets, all other ministries to ensure that funds are allocated to address the needs of PwDs including infrastructure needs, and donors to ensure that funds for PwD are increased based on the programmatic needs of the Afghanistan National Priority Program.</li> </ul>
<p>IV. Lack of capacity to improve reporting of M&amp;E findings and program achievements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the capacity of government ministries in reporting and M&amp;E to accurately reflect project achievements. In the short run international advisers can be hired through the CTAP program to fill the gap and strengthen the internal structures of government ministries.</li> </ul>
<p>V. Despite of having a legal mandate and political commitment to advance the rights of PwDs. The issue has not been a priority for all government agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise a comprehensive plan for inter-ministerial government action to strengthen the disability sector at the macro-level.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>VI. The government is unable to provide assistance to PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate a task force composed of CSOs to lobby for increased funding to support the disability sector so the government can increase the scope of its services for PwDs.</li> </ul>
<p>VII. Lack of Employment opportunities within the government despite of existing disability laws.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate a task force composed of CSOs to ensure the the proper implementation of the disability law that requires ministries to hire PwDs for at least 3% of its total staff.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the development and implementation of regulations that force all government buildings to have the necessary infrastructure to facilitate PwDs' mobility.</li> <li>• Support MoLSAM's efforts for the parliament's approval of a law that increases PwDs employment quota from 3% to 7%.</li> </ul>
VIII. Limited outreach to PwDs from the part of the government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a thorough review of government strategies to ensure that the engagement between PwDs and government ministries increases.</li> </ul>
IX. Weak policy implementation and confusion of responsibilities among government agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review coordination mechanisms between government ministries and create a task force group to monitor progress and standardize procedures.</li> </ul>
X. Lack of standardization for training curriculum and teaching methodologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign the responsibility of developing training curriculums to one government ministry for the creation of materials that are homogeneous and standardized.</li> <li>• Develop policies that require minimum standards for learning and trainings.</li> </ul>
XI. Despite the fact that the UNCRPD article 29 codifies the right to political participation of PwDs, GoIRA lacks the capacity to ensure that these right is exercised by PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access to political and electoral information for PwDs by providing campaign information via sing language and other means that help PwDs exercise their right to vote.</li> </ul>
XII. Despite the fact that the UNCRPD article 21 codifies the right of people with disabilities to freedom of information, there are significant structural challenges to ensure PwDs right to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that PwDs have access to information including internet, radio, and television and address the structural barriers that prevent PwDs from exercising their right to information. For example, the creation and support of information centers for PwDs where the latter can have access to internet, braille books, etc.</li> </ul>
XIII. Lack of quantitative data regarding PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement baseline survey to update quantitative data available. Emphasis should be made on estimating total number of PwDs, type of disability, location, income and education levels, and employment status.</li> </ul>
XIV. Disregard for psychosocial disabilities from the part of donors and disability organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the inclusion of psychological disabilities in donors' funding priorities and programs.</li> </ul>
XV. Funding provided by donors for social inclusion programs is often not sufficient to make a long-lasting and sustainable impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that enough resources are allocated to maximize the impact of donor funded projects including the provision of seed grants to</li> </ul>



	launch businesses and that funding also increases at the pair of inflation.
XVI. Limited role of the UN in the disability sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim advocacy efforts at increasing the role of the United Nations in the disability sector to perform the role of enforcer, policy adviser, and as a coordinating body to ensure that the concerns of the disability sector are mainstreamed in the political agenda and development priorities of the country.</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
I. Significant leverage to empower PwDs by integrating them into the formal educational system through targeted interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize funding for the development of braille materials, the training of technicians, provide access to specialized transportation, and anchor these developments with the current efforts of the Ministry of Education who is currently working on expanding educational opportunities for PwDs.</li> </ul>
II. Opportunity to reduce the number of PwDs by focusing on pre-natal care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize targeted advocacy efforts to ensure that the MoPH includes the provision of pre-natal care as one of its key priorities; the reduction in the number of people disabled at birth as one of the key indicators of success.</li> </ul>
III. Lobby for the continued inclusion and advancement of the rights of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a coalition of CSOs to lobby for the proper implementation of laws that empower PwDs.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E of project implementation, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
IV. Conduct ongoing disability surveys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement surveys through INGOs and NGOs in different geographical areas and districts to identify opportunities for the expansion of services for PwDs. Surveys should focus on documenting location, employment status, income levels, types of disability, and levels of education.</li> </ul>
V. Strong coordination between civil society actors (NGOs and DPOs) and government agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase and strengthen partnerships and linkages between organizations active in the</li> </ul>

	<p>disability sector and the government to share ideas about projects and programs that address the needs of PwDs, support the implementation of policies and monitoring of progress, and facilitate access to areas that currently are off limits for CSOs.</p>
<p>VI. Strengthen the mandate and scope of oversight bodies to advance the rights of PwDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the scope and mandate of the AIHCR to ensure that constitutional mandates and laws that supports PwDs are implemented.</li> </ul>
<p>VII. Support the Expansion of Educational Opportunities for PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the expansion of Educational Opportunities for PwDs by ensuring that transportation measures are considered in education policy, provide feedback to the Ministry of Education based on lessons learned, and provide feedback for the proper design and implementation of the policy.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>VIII. The government has signaled increasing support for PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobby for the inclusion of housing, transportation, accessibility issues, and economic empowerment needs to address the obstacles that prevent the social and economic inclusion of PwDs in a holistic way.</li> </ul>
<p>IX. Increase the participation of PwDs in elections as per article 29 of the UNCRDP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between CSOs, DPOs, and government entities to facilitate the right to vote for PwDs in the upcoming election.</li> </ul>
<p>X. Increase PwDs access to information based on Article 21 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a strategy to engage media in disability related issues. This can be through the legislative process by creating and alliance between CSOs and the Wolisi Jirga, or through direct engagement in coordination meetings.</li> <li>• Advocate for the enactment of legislation that forces media to be inclusive of PwDs needs including real-time translation in sign language.</li> </ul>
<p>XI. Opportunity to increase employment for PwDs if the 3% quota is properly implemented by government ministries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate efforts to lobby for the execution and monitoring of the implementation of the 3% policy, and create linkages between government and CSOs' job placement programs to develop the capacity of PwDs according to the skills required by the government.</li> </ul>

XII. Opportunity to expand self-employment in the districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase linkages with government and donors to create a viable mechanisms for promoting employment opportunities especially at the district level.</li> </ul>
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Threats	Recommendations
I. Weak enforcement mechanisms to enforce the current laws that support PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an oversight body similar to the Disability Stakeholder Coordination Group with the authority to enforce laws and with oversight powers to ensure that the implementation of laws that support PwDs are carried out. The oversight body must be composed by independent institutions including CSO representatives of organizations active in the disability sector and outside of it to guarantee its independence.</li> </ul>
II. Corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make corruption cases public through coordination bodies such as the DSCG as soon as it is learned that an individual, organization, or government official engaged in such practice. Relationships with law enforcement agencies such as the courts, attorney general, and the Afghan security forces must be strengthened to ensure that corruption complaints lead to prosecution.</li> <li>• Advocate for making the budget and spending process public and open to the scrutiny of CSOs and independent citizens to improve transparency.</li> </ul>
III. Increasing number of PwDs due to war related injuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the outreach of mine awareness programs through TV and other mass media to include individuals living in the districts.</li> <li>• Increase funding for demining programs to reduce the number of casualties and conduct advocacy programs to reach out to AOGs with a petition requesting a reduction in the number of mines used.</li> <li>• Increase funding to strengthen the disability sector as the number of PwDs will continue to steadily increase. Thus, the system must be able to cope with the influx of war related disabilities.</li> </ul>
IV. Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek closer coordination with the security forces to mitigate the current risks associated</li> </ul>

	with delivering services to PwDs in rural areas.
V. Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate and launch a strong advocacy campaign to ensure that funding is provided by the Ministry of Finance during the appropriation process - Funding should be prioritized for health and education as these are two of the primary needs of PwDs – and that policies to support the development of a market based funding scheme for CSOs is developed.</li> </ul>

### 1.2.2. Meso-Level

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
I. Large number of organizations active in the disability sector with different mandates that cover most of the needs of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between organizations to create synergy between programs and mandates.</li> </ul>
II. Programmatic support to develop the capacity of Afghan CSOs to advance issues related to the disability sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide further programmatic support to local CSOs to maximize the impact of activities for PwDs and partners.</li> </ul>
III. Wide range of programs that support PwDs in their different needs including social inclusion, awareness, economic empowerment, rehabilitation, accessibility, and education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between organizations to create synergy between programs and avoid duplication of efforts.</li> </ul>
IV. Wide range of programs that are inclusive of all stakeholders related the needs of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue designing programs that are inclusive of all relevant stakeholders to ensure that partners remain engaged and synergy is created to maximize impact for the benefit of PwDs.</li> </ul>
V. Long history of CSOs working for the empowerment of PwDs in Afghanistan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between new organizations and those with a long-term presence to ensure that knowledge is shared to build the institutional capacity of the disability sector.</li> </ul>
VI. Experienced organizations have a large geographical outreach although it is primarily focused on key Urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for mechanisms to engage districts adjacent to urban areas to expand the geographical reach of services provided to PwDs and end the urban bias.</li> </ul>

VII. Organizations try to outreach and accommodate to the specific needs of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide capacity building to other CSOs to increase their outreach capacity and efforts.</li> </ul>
VIII. Strong inter-agency collaboration to support PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a high degree of inter-agency cooperation to create synergy between projects, serve the needs of PwDs in a holistic way, and prevent duplication of efforts.</li> </ul>
IX. Existence of the Advocacy Committee and strong advocacy efforts from part of CSOs to advance the rights of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the ACPD and carefully plan activities in close coordination with other relevant stakeholders to advance the rights of PwDs in a holistic way.</li> </ul>
X. Programs implemented by CSOs provide financial assistance to PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue providing financial assistance to PwDs to address one of their critical needs – economic hardship –, and to provide an incentive for PwDs to continue attending CBR programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
I. Limited Number of Local Organizations working on the disability sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide further support to nurture the growth of organizations that address the needs of PwDs as their number will continue to rise due to war related injuries.</li> </ul>
II. Need for more effective advocacy programs to improve society's perceptions and government's responsiveness to the needs of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the increased coordination between organizations active in the disability sector to include psychological disabilities, the reorganization of responsibilities among different ministries, increase accessibility of public buildings and other facilities, standardize curriculums, ensure that policies that support PwDs are executed, and continue providing awareness raising campaigns.</li> </ul>
III. Projects that support PwDs are unsustainable and limited in geographical coverage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise market based approaches for project funding to ensure that programs that support PwDs are available for years to come.</li> </ul>
IV. Lack of Financial resources for CSOs to improve their effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness among donors about the need to increase flexibility in funding schemes so local organizations can capitalize and increase their effectiveness while reducing costs.</li> </ul>
V. Lack of involvement from the Board of Directors to provide Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide capacity building to board members of local organizations to ensure they remain engaged and that they perform their duties as mandated by the law.</li> </ul>
VI. Weak linkages between CSOs in the disability sector and organizations outside of it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to organizations outside of the disability sector to strengthen relationships with other relevant stakeholders who may not</li> </ul>

	be directly involved with PwDs but can provide valuable services to them.
VII. CBR programs often provide vocational training in trades that may not be sustainable in the long-run.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redesign CBR programs to ensure that PwDs can become self-sufficient both in the short and long-run.</li> </ul>
VIII. Limited Impact of Basic Education Courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combine Basic Education Courses with vocational training in low skilled but marketable trades such as drivers, mailmen, and guards which will make PwDs more competitive in the labor market.</li> <li>• Increase cooperation with the Ministry of Education to ensure the long-term continuity of education courses for PwDs.</li> <li>• Increase awareness-raising activities at school to sensitize students about PwDs and the contributions that they can make to prevent discrimination.</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
I. Promote Employment through innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote employment generation through innovation such as creating resume databases for PwDs and the creation of a website where donors and employers can look for the resumes of PwDs.</li> <li>• Create a national resume database for PwDs where all organizations and government agencies can look for candidates directly.</li> </ul>
II. Programs to support the capacity development of CSOs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build the capacity of NGOs so they can take advantage of opportunities present including multi-agency coordination and advocacy strategies to advance issues related to the disability sector at the national, regional, and local levels.</li> </ul>
III. Empower PwDs through Community Based Rehabilitation Programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with local authorities and community elders to expand services in the districts where possible.</li> </ul>
IV. Empower PwDs through targeted advocacy programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement targeted advocacy programs to increase employment opportunities for PwDs, for the consolidation of the Federation of DPOs, the creation of government programs that build the capacity of DPOs and CSOs, and to lobby donors to prioritize funding for projects that target infrastructure development</li> </ul>

	<p>in government buildings and other facilities to improve accessibility.</p>
V. Network with organizations active outside of the disability sector to increase employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase linkages with organizations outside of the disability sector through awareness-raising activities, conferences, and working groups.</li> </ul>
VI. Increase resources provided to PwDs post-graduation from TVET programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide seed grants as part of a comprehensive package for PwDs' vocational training programs to maximize the number of PwDs that pursue self-employment while creating new employment opportunities for other PwDs.</li> </ul>
VII. Room for expansion of successful programs if funding mechanisms become available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand services to ensure that the disability sector can cope with the growing population of PwDs due to war injuries.</li> <li>• Advocate for more funding for the implementation of programs both from the government of Afghanistan and international donors to increase funding available given the growing number of PwDs.</li> </ul>
VIII. Increase collaboration between local CSOs, as well as CSOs and INGOs, to improve service delivery and capacity building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase collaboration between local CSOs and INGOs for capacity building, program design, funding, expertise, revision of vocational training curriculum, employment for PwDs, and to create coalitions for advocacy purposes.</li> <li>• Increase partnerships between local CSOs including NGOs and DPOs for advocacy activities, implementation of community education programs and awareness raising activities, improve service delivery, and increase the geographical coverage of the organizations to capture funding for underserved areas.</li> </ul>
IX. Potential for increased outreach with MRRD, MoEc, INGOs, and local NGOs active outside of the disability sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between government ministries including MRRD, MoEC, MMD, MoPH, MoHE, and MoEd, and local CSOs for policy making to ensure that the provisions set forth in the Afghanistan Compact, the ACBP, and the ANAPD are implemented.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
X. Increased Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an oversight body to ensure</li> </ul>

	transparency and accountability among organizations, strengthen anti-corruption laws, create channels for denouncing corrupt practices, and increase linkages with the security services to ensure prosecution.
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Threats	Recommendations
I. Decreasing funding and more reliance on the government to award grants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobby the government, especially the Ministry of Finance, to ensure that budget appropriations remain at the current levels of funding.</li> <li>• CSOs must develop new market based mechanisms to obtain funding to break from their donor dependency.</li> </ul>
II. Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with community elders and local shuras to raise their awareness about programs that support PwDs. Ask them for guarantees regarding the security of staff members if the organization works in insecure areas.</li> </ul>
III. Changes in the regulatory framework can threaten the activities of CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become involved in policy making decisions to ensure regulatory stability.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
IV. Changes within market trends can threaten the long-term sustainability of economic empowerment programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct market research and adjust the curriculum of vocational training and basic education programs according to changes in the labor market and consumer preferences to ensure they remain current.</li> </ul>

### 1.2.3. Micro-Level

Strengths	Recommendations
I. Commitment to raise social awareness about people's with disabilities rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue implementing and expand the scope of awareness-raising activities to challenge the social stigma associated with disability to open new opportunities for the empowerment of PwDs.</li> </ul>
II. Commitment from the part of PwDs to participate in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture PwDs's commitment to continue being</li> </ul>



empowerment programs including education.	engaged in programs and activities.
III. Programs that target mobility issues are being implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand programs that target mobility issues to address one of the key obstacles that prevent PwDs from becoming actively engaged in their communities.</li> </ul>
IV. Follow up Programs to support PwDs' employment are being implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen employment programs for PwDs through innovation and by increasing linkages between NGOs and the private sector.</li> </ul>
V. Economic empowerment including basic education and vocational trainings implemented by CSOs achieve intended goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen economic empowerment programs including basic education and vocational trainings by constantly revising the curriculum and making the skills relevant to market needs.</li> </ul>
VI. CBR Programs and activities increase beneficiaries' self-esteem and promotes self-sufficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen economic empowerment including basic education and vocational trainings to ensure that PwDs remain employed in the long-run to further increase beneficiaries' self-esteem and self-sufficiency.</li> </ul>
VII. Evidence that PwDs are hired by other PwDs who are running organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen relationships with micro-enterprises run by PwDs active in the informal economy to widen employment opportunities for low-skilled PwDs.</li> <li>Support PwDs led businesses by advocating for the creation of infrastructure that improve their mobility.</li> </ul>
VIII. Awareness raising activities are effective at sensitizing communities about PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue implementing awareness raising activities to sensitize communities.</li> </ul>
IX. Skills developed by beneficiaries of programs are sustainable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise training curriculums periodically to ensure that the skills remain relevant to the market place.</li> <li>Advocate for the creation of infrastructure that facilitates PwDs' access to government buildings and other institutions to increase mobility and, thus, reduce one of the main obstacles that prevent PwDs from becoming economically independent.</li> </ul>

Weaknesses	Recommendations
I. Lack of awareness about the rights and potential contributions of PwDs among Afghan Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the scope of awareness-raising activities and advocacy activities to ensure that the government disseminates positive information regarding PwDs through major media outlets.</li> </ul>

II. Discrimination limit the potential contributions PwDs can make to society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the scope of awareness-raising campaigns and advocacy activities to ensure that the government enacts and enforces strong anti-discrimination laws in Afghanistan.</li> </ul>
III. Gender Biases Reduce the Impact of Programs that support PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include gender related information to awareness raising programs to improve the status of women and facilitate their access to programs that will benefit female PwDs.</li> </ul>
IV. Limited means of transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand programs that address mobility issues for PwDs.</li> <li>• Advocate for legislation that requires public transit to have the required infrastructure to transport PwDs</li> </ul>
V. Lack of comprehensive programs that address the needs of PwDs in a comprehensive way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to increase the amount of resources of donor funded projects and design programs using a comprehensive approach to address the root causes of PwDs' poverty.</li> </ul>
VI. Ineffective Health Care Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus advocacy activities to improve women's health while increasing access to high quality healthcare to decrease the number of birth defects that can lead to disability.</li> <li>• Focus advocacy efforts on expanding the network of clinics that are specialized in providing services to PwDs.</li> </ul>
VII. Discrimination creates barriers for PwDs to access education, employment, and other services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus awareness-raising activities in schools, the private sector, and government entities to prevent harassment and bullying against PwDs.</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
I. Ongoing efforts to supply PwDs with materials to improve access mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize the impact of CBR programs, economic empowerment activities, and basic education courses by incorporating mobility issues within program design.</li> </ul>
II. PwDs are highly motivated to participate in electoral processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the creation programs that support the political engagement of PwDs.</li> </ul>
III. Opportunities to increase interactions and social capital for PwDs if a nurturing environment is provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create opportunities for the social interaction between PwDs aiming at developing a strong social network as a coping mechanism against a weak safety net.</li> </ul>
IV. Increased living standards for PwDs if employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create new employment schemes to promote</li> </ul>

opportunities are available.	<p>PwD employment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involve PwDs in the lobbying efforts for the implementation of the 3% government employment quota requirement.</li> </ul>
V. Increased advocacy opportunities and political leverage for PwDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate advocacy efforts between grassroots organizations and the ACPD, to increase their impact.</li> <li>Nurture political activism at the grassroots level to increase the political leverage that PwDs have.</li> </ul>

Threats	Recommendations
I. Threat of economic deprivation due to lack of employment opportunities and high unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase advocacy efforts for the implementation of the 3% law to open job opportunities for PwDs within the government sector, link PwDs with programs such as ABADE and AREDP to improve the business prospects of those who are already running a business, improve access to finance and provide seed grants for PwDs, and include apprenticeship projects at factories, offices, and government entities to improve the skills of PwDs.</li> </ul>
II. Discrimination can lead to PwDs depression and to take extreme actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to increase awareness-raising activities that aim at removing the stigma against PwDs through mass media and to pressure donors and GoIRA to include psychological support for PwDs to deal with mental disabilities.</li> <li>Create a hotline to provide psychological support for PwDs during times of crisis.</li> </ul>
III. Lack of infrastructure to accommodate to the needs of PwDs can result in life threatening situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus advocacy activities on infrastructure development to make the environment accessible for PwDs to minimize the risk of life threatening accidents.</li> </ul>
IV. Weak safety net to protect PwDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus advocacy activities to ensure that the government includes the provision of shelter for PwDs as one of its top priorities along with economic support for those who have lost family members to provide a safety net for PwDs.</li> </ul>
V. Insecurity can also pose a risk for PwDs long-term financial security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for the development of emergency response plans in policies that support PwDs</li> </ul>

	to ensure a proper and timely response if economic decline threaten the livelihoods of PwDs.
VI. Limited choices for PwDs can translate into forcing PwDs into social arrangements that go against their will and may be harmful for the integrity of the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create legal mechanisms to prevent PwDs from being forced into social arrangements that may threaten their physical integrity. It is also critical that women shelters specialized in female PwDs are created to protect vulnerable women.</li> </ul>
VII. Corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create better linkages with the security sector and a direct channel between citizens and donors where the former can denounce organizations that engage in these practices to prevent corruption.</li> </ul>

## II. Analytical Framework

The SWOT analysis was conducted using a tri-level analytical framework. Findings are organized at macro-level, meso-level, and micro-level.

The macro-level incorporates policies and institutions that have a strong influence over large segments of society. The scope of the macro-level is policy and government. The strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats have a direct impact throughout all organizations and PwDs in particular. Changes initiated at the policy level have far-reaching implications for the future development of the disability sector in Afghanistan.

The Meso-level includes organizations who are independent of the government and have limited influence over policy making. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats present for NGOs, INGOs, vocational schools for PwDs, CSOs, etc., have a direct impact in regards to the availability and delivery of services for PwDs as well as for advocacy purposes.

The Micro-level includes PwDs and their host communities. They are the primary recipients of services offered by actors present at the meso-level and are directly affected by decisions taken at the macro-level. The strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats present have a direct influence over the daily life of PwDs.

The questions that guided the research endeavors at the three levels include:

1. What are the strengths of the disability sector at the macro/meso/micro levels?
2. What are the opportunities present in the disability sector at the macro/meso/micro levels?
3. How can organizations active at the macro/meso/micro level can capitalize on the strengths and opportunities?
4. Do the strengths and opportunities present will improve the socio-economic situation of PwDs?

5. What are the weaknesses of the disability sector at the macro/meso/micro levels?
6. What are the threats present in the disability sector at the macro/meso/micro levels?
7. How can the weaknesses be addressed at the macro/meso/micro levels?
8. What mitigation strategies and advocacy activities can be used to cope with the current threats present at the macro/meso/micro levels?

The answers to these questions shed light over the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats of the disability sector. They also offered strategies and recommendations to capitalize on the opportunities and strengths, as well as to cope with weaknesses and threats.

### III. Methodology

To conduct the SWOT analysis, the research methodologies used were literature reviews, in-depth interviews, and focus groups.

#### 3.1. Literature Review

To gain a deep understanding from a theoretical point of view including policies, projects that support PwDs, etc., a literature review of secondary sources was conducted. The latter provided an overview of the disability sector, areas that have to be researched during interviews, and valuable information for the triangulation of findings. The documents that were reviewed included:

- National Disability Survey of Afghanistan (NDSA), Handicap International, 2005;
- NRVA 2007/8, disability section;
- Afghanistan National Disability Action Plan (ANDAP);
- National Disability Draft Policy Paper;
- AIHRC research report 2012, disability section;
- Social Protection Strategy of ANDS;
- CCD Community Need Assignment Survey report 2011;
- Reports from donors and other implementing agencies regarding projects that support the disability sector;
- Policies and other government documents that refer to the disability sector;
- Academic papers related to the disability sector;

- Internal Reports from CCD.

### 3.2. In-depth Interviews

To strengthen and compliment the findings of the literature review, and in order to gather a full understanding of the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats present in the disability sector, in depth interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders at the macro, meso, and micro levels.

#### 3.2.1. Macro-Level

At the Macro-Level, government officials and institutional donors were targeted. The goal was to understand at the policy level what programs are present to support PwDs, opportunities for advocacy, and what policies will shape the future development of the disability sector. The following ministries were interviewed during the research endeavors:

No	Interviewee	Organization/Ministry /Beneficiary	Position	Email ID/Telephone Number
1	Mohammed Ali Mohabati	Afghanistan independent human rights commission	Coordinator For Protection & Promotion of The Person With Disabilities	Ali.mohabati2010@gmail.com 079.069.0026
2	Dr.Musa Zia	Ministry of MOPH, Kabul,Afghanistan	Disability and Rehabilitation Technical Coordinator Disability and Rehabilitation Dep Of Moph Afghanistan	ziamusa@ymail.com 078.749.7101 078.979.6495
3	Abdul Mateen Jafar	Ministry of Education	Director Of Public Education	070.006.3957
4	Pr. Shah Wali Atayee	Ministry of Justice	Director Of Plan And Policy Department	070.738.1127 075.205.1008 077.420.9505
5	Muhammed Sediq khan	Ministry of Economy	Director Of Ngo	079.981.5724
6	Yama Hakimi	AAR Japan	Director	079.700.5007

### 3.2.2. Meso-Level

At the Meso-Level, NGOs, INGOs, CSOs, and DPOs were approached. The goal was to understand the interactions between the macro and micro levels, the projects and activities that are being implemented, and how these impact beneficiaries. Interviews shed light over the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats at the organizational level. Organizations that were interviewed include:

No	Interviewee	Organization/Ministry /Beneficiary	Position	Email ID/Telephone Number
1	Mr. Mujtaba	SERVE	Director	079.965.3015
3	Dr.Abdul Basir	AABRAR	Director	070.027.3558 077.555.8885
4	Amin Zaki	ORMDA Organization	Director	070.090.9590
5	Najmodin	International Committee of the Red Cross	Head of Orthopedic Center	079.945.8650
6	Mohammed Amin Qanet	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA)	Head Of Rad Program	070.029.9308 020.232.0156
7	Humayun	Handicap International	Program Coordinator	N/A
9	Mr. Nezami Saib	Community Center for the Disabled	Director of CCD	N/A
10	Suleiman	Also	Executive Director	079.922.0987
11	Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz	ANAB	Director of ANAB	079.935.0349
12	Sayed Rashid Khan	ANAD	Admin of ANAD and Principle at Vocational High School of the Deaf	079.966.0779
13	Syawash Payab and Akhtar Mohammad	FWF	Director of FWF and Principle of Kabul High School	079.922.0987
14	Sayed Wahdat Mosawi	DPO	Director	079.914.0682
15	Aminullah	DPO	Director	079.953.1389 079.911.2570
16	Mohammed Amin	DPO	Director	079.738.4878
17	Safiullah Amarkhail	Save the Children	Child Protection Manager	Safiullah.amarkhail@savethechildren.org 079.599.8288

### 3.2.3. Micro-Level

At the Micro-level, project beneficiaries from CCD and other disability organizations were interviewed. The goal was to understand the interactions between the macro and meso levels, and how these impact beneficiaries at the micro-level. Interviews with beneficiaries shed light over the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats at the community level. Beneficiaries that were interviewed include:

No	Name of Interviewed	Organization/Ministry /Beneficiary	Position	Email ID/Telephone Number
1	Sajem pardis-	SERVE	Beneficiary	070.028.0506
2	Faiz Mohammad	SERVE	Beneficiary	070.028.0506
3	Farhanaz Alizdah	CCD	Beneficiary	070.023.2344
4	Haidi Mohammad	CCD	Beneficiary	070.023.2344
5	Razia	AABRAR	Beneficiary	079.667.5609
6	Shogofa	AABRAR	Beneficiary	079.667.5609
7	Zahra	AABRAR	Beneficiary	079.667.5609
8	Muheb Rahaman	FWF	Beneficiary	079.922.0987
9	Abdul Sabur	ORMDA Organization	Beneficiary	070.090.9590
10	Abdul Khalil	ORMDA Organization	Beneficiary	070.090.9590
11	Shakila	ALSO	Beneficiary	N/A
12	Madina	ALSO	Beneficiary	N/A
13	Najeeburrahman	FWF	Beneficiary	079.922.0987
14	Kamela	FWF	Beneficiary	079.922.0987
15	Godan Nabizada	DPO	Beneficiary	079.090.9052
16	Abdul Satar Mobarez	DPO	Beneficiary	070.708.6497

### 3.2.5. Focus Groups

The focus group with beneficiaries was held on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013. All beneficiaries who participated in the interviews were invited. However, the following beneficiaries were the only ones who attended: Mis Farzana (CCD), Mr. Akhtar from (FWF); and Mr. Naseem from (AABRAR).

The focus group with CSOs was held on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013. All organizations who participated in the interviews were invited. However, only three organizations participated. These include: Mr. Mirbakht from SERVE; Mr.



Dawood from ICRC; and Mr. Nasreen from CCD.

The focus group for government entities was held on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013. All government officials who participated in the interviews were invited. However, Mr. Asad Safi from AICHR was the only person who attended the focus group.

### 3.2.6. Challenges

Participation of donors and government officials was the main challenge during the interview process. In fact, AidTrends was unable to interview the following agencies USAID, ECHO, Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, and GIZ because they refuse to set a time for AidTrends staff to come.

A second challenge was the focus groups. Despite of extending an invitation to all participants, only seven individuals participated. This indicates that more incentives need to be provided to focus groups participants including monetary compensation to provide further motivations to participate.

## **IV. Research Findings**

### **4.1. Strengths**

#### 4.1.1 Macro-level

I. UN Convention on the Rights for People with Disabilities has been ratified by the Afghan government.

The Afghan government has shown a deep commitment to support people with disabilities. The fact that the GoIRA ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on September 8, 2012, illustrates this point.<sup>1</sup> It also codifies within Afghan law the rights of people with disability. The convention promotes, protects, and guarantees full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities. It also promotes and respects the dignity of PwDs and defines person with disability as someone who has long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.<sup>2</sup>

The convention lays down the foundations for the political participation of PwDs, as well as their inclusion in public life. It also provides a legal framework to follow for donors, organizations and government institutions to design programs and projects that support PwDs.<sup>3</sup>

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1 United Nations. "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," *United Nations Treaty Collection* ([http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg\\_no=IV-15&chapter=4&lang=en](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg_no=IV-15&chapter=4&lang=en); 13 Dec. 2013), 24 Jun. 2013.

2 Haidi Mohammad. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

3 United Nations. "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," *United Nations Treaty Collection* ([http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg\\_no=IV-15&chapter=4&lang=en](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg_no=IV-15&chapter=4&lang=en); 13 Dec. 2013), 24 Jun. 2013.

## II. Article 6 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Article 6 of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes and emphasizes the protection of women with with disabilities. The convention states that: “1. *States Parties recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination, and in this regard shall take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;*” and 2. “*States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Convention.*”<sup>4</sup> These statutes provide the Afghan Government with a strong legal framework to protect and advance the rights of women with disabilities.

## III. Article 29 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities codifies the public and political participation of PwDs.

In addition to providing a framework for donors, organizations, and government agencies, the UN Convention for People with Disabilities also guarantees the political inclusion and participation of PwDs. The Afghan government has shown a strong commitment to include PwDs in decision-making processes as the Afghan electoral law also emphasizes the participation of PwDs based on this article. Article 29 of the UN Convention specifically guarantees the following rights for PwDs.

- (a) that persons with disabilities can fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for Persons with disabilities to vote and be elected;*
- (b) that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;*
- (c) protects the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office, and perform all public functions at all levels of government.*<sup>5</sup>

## IV. Article 21 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities codifies the right of PwDs to freedom of expression and access to information.

Article 21 of the UN Convention for PwDs also codifies the right of PwDs to freedom of expression and access to information. It states that all governments including GoIRA shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice.<sup>6</sup>

Article 21 provides the legal framework to:

- (a) provide information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost;*

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4 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

5 United Nations. “Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,” *United Nations Treaty Collection* ([http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg\\_no=IV-15&chapter=4&lang=en](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg_no=IV-15&chapter=4&lang=en); 13 Dec. 2013), 24 Jun. 2013.

6 United Nations. “Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,” *United Nations Treaty Collection* ([http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg\\_no=IV-15&chapter=4&lang=en](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg_no=IV-15&chapter=4&lang=en); 13 Dec. 2013), 24 Jun. 2013.

- (b) facilitate the use of sign languages and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication by persons with disabilities in official interactions;
- (c) urges private entities that provide services to the general public to provide information and services in accessible and usable formats for persons with disabilities;
- (d) encourages the mass media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities;
- (e) recognizes and promotes the use of sign languages.<sup>7</sup>

The presence of this article is an advantage for PwDs in Afghanistan as it provides the legal framework to facilitate the inclusion of PwDs in public and private life by guaranteeing their access to information.

#### V. Strong International and National legal framework to support PwDs.

In addition to the CRPD, there is strong legal framework that support people with disabilities in Afghanistan.<sup>8</sup> For instance, there is the Afghanistan National Compact,<sup>9</sup> the Afghanistan National Disability Strategy (ANDS) that fits within the Livelihoods and Social Protection Public Investment Program which targets one of the poorest and most vulnerable groups in Afghanistan. The overall goal of the NDS is to eradicate poverty among PwDs. It lays down the foundations for the recognition of the rights of PwDs, and provides strong social protections for PwDs.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to the NDS, there is the Afghanistan National Disability Action Plan (ANDAP), and the Disability Law. The ANDAP and Disability Law provide with comprehensive strategies to empower PwDs including access to education and employment opportunities. In regards to female PwDs, the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) launched the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) which aims at empowering women in four critical areas including education, health, and economy among others. NAPWA takes female PwDs as one of its key sectors of intervention.<sup>11</sup> In fact, in the current policy making process to enact legislation that will support poor women, the MoWA is making female PwDs a priority<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Disabled, and Martyrs (MoLSAM) is also working on new legislation to further advance the rights of PwDs.<sup>13</sup>

#### VI. Nascent institutional framework to oversee progress of PwDs

In addition to having a strong legal framework, the Afghan government has also laid out the foundations for the creation of an institutional framework to support and oversee progress. These includes the creation of the Committee for Disabled and Martyrs at the Parliament (Wolisi Jirga), the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled,<sup>14</sup> the Ministry of Women Affairs, and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

<sup>10</sup> Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Afghanistan National Development Strategy, (Kabul, Afghanistan: Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008), 34.

<sup>11</sup> Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan*, (Kabul, Afghanistan: Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Apr 2007), 1

<sup>12</sup> Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

<sup>13</sup> Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

<sup>14</sup> Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM.

Commission (AICHR).

The Committee for the Disabled and Martyrs (Wolisi Jirga) is tasked with promoting legislation that advances the rights of PwDs and oversee its implementation.<sup>15</sup> MoLSAM is mandated to work on labor affairs, social protection and welfare, and provide services for persons with disabilities and families of Martyrs. Under the pillars of economic and social development.<sup>16</sup> The MoWA has created policies to support the empowerment of women including female PwDs and it also has the mandate of overseeing and protecting the rights of women.<sup>17</sup> Regarding the AICHR, a constitutional mandate guarantees its independence and the office protects the human rights of all Afghans including PwDs. In fact, in 2005 Afghanistan independent commission for human rights established a separate commission to support the rights of people with Disability.

The AIHRC, MoLSAM, and the MoWA have an extensive field presence throughout the country which enables them to effectively monitors and assess the overall human rights situation of PwDs, especially women. The AICHR has eight Provincial offices in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Gardez, Bamyan, Herat, Kunduz. It also plans to have four regional offices dedicated to support the human rights for PwDs.<sup>18</sup> MoLSAM and the MoWA has presence in all major provincial capitals.

The Wolisi Jirga, AIHRC, MoLSAM, and MoWA are further supported by other institutional frameworks that support PwDs. This includes the National Disability Strategy (NDS) which is a general poverty reduction strategy and emphasizes the inclusion of PwDs. The NDS created several bodies to oversee the implementation of the strategy including the National Disability Commission (NDC). The latter is an independent and inter-ministerial structure within the the Government of Afghanistan that has the mandate and competency to address the various needs of PwDs. It was created in response to the failure of existing government organizations to meet the needs of PwDs.

The fact that the GoIRA has shown a strong commitment to support PwDs through laws and government bodies to oversee the implementation of such legal frameworks suggest that PwDs will remain a priority in policy making deliberations.

#### VII. 3% government quota law to promote employment of PwDs within government institutions.

In addition to supporting the basic rights of PwDs, the government also promotes employment opportunities for them by imposing a quota that requires all government institutions to hire PwDs for at least 3% of their total workforce.<sup>19</sup> Findings suggest that few government institutions have implemented the law successfully increasing employment opportunities for PwDs.<sup>20</sup>

#### VIII. Ongoing efforts to increase access to education for PwDs.

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Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

15 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

16 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

17 Ibid

18 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

19 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

20 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

The strong legal framework, nascent institutional oversight body, and the employment of PwDs is further supported by extending access to education for PwDs. The Ministry of Education (MofEd) has the goal of providing education for every child in Afghanistan including PwDs. In fact, the government of Afghanistan recently opened four schools for the visually impaired in Kabul aiming at improving access to education for PwDs.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, evidence shows that schools that are being supported by the ministry of education are having significant success as Mr. Moheeb Rahman, a hearing impaired individual who attends 11<sup>th</sup> grade, states.<sup>22</sup> It is important to mention that the Ministry of Education intends to create an inclusive education unit within the Ministry to further facilitate the expansion of educational services for PwDs.<sup>23</sup>

#### IX. Ongoing efforts to increase access to health for PwDs.

The revision of the strategic and operational plan of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) is ongoing. Its strategic priorities include: improve the nutritional status of the Afghan population; increase equitable access to quality health services; enhance evidence-based decision making by establishing a culture that uses data for improvement; and support health promotion and community empowerment.<sup>24</sup> In regards to the disability sector, the Ministry of Public Health ambitions to promote “*a barrier free society for all underpinned by the principles of participation, integration and equalization of opportunities as defined by the CRPD.*”<sup>25</sup> This translates into having PwDs access to health as one of the priorities within the operational revision. In fact, Dr. Muza Zia, Disability and rehabilitation Technical Coordinator at the Disability and Rehabilitation Department of the MoPH, expressed that PwDs is one of the key priorities for the ministry and having a strong strategy for the disability sector is one of the ministry's strengths.<sup>26</sup> Thus, it is key that organizations active in the disability sector organize targeted advocacy efforts to capitalize on the ministry's actions while ensuring that the provision of prosthetic limbs, physical rehabilitation, and other services that benefit directly PwDs becomes one of its key operational priorities. The number of PwDs that have access to health facilities can be one of the main indicators of success for the implementation of the strategy. The latter is key as one of the threats that the disability sector faces is an increasing number of PwDs due to war related injuries.

#### X. Units specifically designed to serve the Needs of PwDs within government agencies.

In addition to having a strong legal framework to advance the rights of People with disabilities, the government has also taken actions at the inter-ministerial level to empower PwDs. For example, the Parliament created the Wolisi Jirga or Committee for Disabled and Martyrs.<sup>27</sup> The MofPH has the Disability and Rehabilitation Department,<sup>28</sup> MoLSAM has the Directorate of Disability,<sup>29</sup> the AIHRC also includes the Directorate of Disability within its organizational structure, and the MoWA has a specialized unit that deals with women's

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21 Abdul Mateen Jafar. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level – MoED. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

22 Moheeb Rahman. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

23 Abdul Mateen Jafar. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level – MoED. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

24 Dr. Musa Zia. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Public Health. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

28 Ibid.

29 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

economic issues including those of PwDs.<sup>30</sup> This reflects a strong commitment from the part of the government to address the issues that PwDs face in a holistic way.

#### XI. Significant support from the part of donors to assist PwDs

Research findings show that there is a strong commitment from the part of donors to invest in programs that support PwDs. For example, ECHO and USAID support sustainable livelihoods activities. WFP provided funding to support students who are visually impaired. GIZ is involved in providing TVET programs and recently opened schools for blind people. The Swedish committee also supports education for the blind. AAR Japan has been investing in Mine Awareness programs. UNOPS has also provided funding for mine awareness and CBR programs. The European Commission has also funded projects for physical rehabilitation. UNDP also provided support to ANAB for the production of a sign language dictionary with 2000 words.<sup>31</sup> Thus, the fact that the Afghan government has made PwDs a priority has been welcomed by donors who are providing funding to improve the lives of PwDs. This is a point that is also raised by PwDs who recognize the efforts of the donor community in regards to providing support for the empowerment of PwDs.<sup>32</sup>

#### XII. Institutional Donors are running mine awareness programs to prevent the rise in the total number of PwDs.

AAR Japan has been actively working in mine awareness programs through its partners. This includes organizing events, lectures, TV, radio, and mobile cinemas. The program aims to increase understanding about mines which are considered to be hidden enemies. Raising awareness both on media and mobile cinema can increase the information that people have about land-mines reducing the risk for people about becoming disabled due to an explosion.<sup>33</sup>

#### XIII. Mine awareness programs have shown to be effective

Mine awareness programs have shown to be effective in reducing the number of injuries due to mines, and, therefore, decreasing the number of people that become disabled due to accidents. According to AAR Japan, in 2002 there were 120 reports of land-mine related injuries in their area of operations. However, by 2012, there were only forty recorded incidents where civilians were hurt. In addition to providing mine awareness programs, demining projects have also been responsible for the decline in the number of injuries.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Meso-level

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30 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

31 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

32 Abdul Mateen Jafar. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level – MoED. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

33 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

34 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

I. Large number of organizations active in the disability sector with different mandates that cover most needs of PwDs.

Research findings show that there is a large number of organizations working in the disability sector catering to the different needs of PwDs. The following organizations were highlighted during the research endeavors:

Tawanmandi: Its mission is to “strengthen Afghan civil society and its relationship with the Afghan Government in order to improve the Government's accountability and responsiveness.” Tawanmandi is involved in gender, youth, and disability programs.<sup>35</sup>

SERVE Afghanistan's purpose is to offer hope to the people of Afghanistan. They seek to address personal, social and environmental needs. Its projects emphasize community development, education and vocational training for Afghans with disabilities and public health/nutrition education.<sup>36</sup>

Afghan Amputee Bicyclists for Rehabilitation and Recreation (AABRAR): is a local Afghan non-governmental organization that is concerned with the rehabilitation and socio-economic integration of PwDs and other vulnerable groups. AABRAR has two well-equipped physiotherapy centers in Kabul and Jalalabad for vulnerable and disabled people. Male and female staff are trained professionals, they run outpatient centers, and also provide community services in people's homes when movement is severely restricted. The organization also runs a monthly bicycle-training program with a monthly intake of 20 beneficiaries. The program includes literacy and numeracy classes, health education, mine awareness and first aid training for all participants. Trainees who graduate are given a bicycle. Young trainees use the bikes to ride to school while adult trainees use them to ride to work or start mobile businesses. AABRAR has implemented a number of vocational training courses for disabled and other vulnerable men, women, and girls to assist them in gaining skills to earn a livelihood. Community based training programs include tailoring and embroidery, computer and english courses, auto mechanic, mobile repairing, television repairing, carpet weaving, carpentry, bicycle repair, generator repair, and beauty parlor.<sup>37</sup>

Association for Aid and Relief, Japan (AAR Japan) is dedicated to assisting people in the most vulnerable situation. They fund projects that improve PwDs' economic, mental, and social self-reliance. AAR Japan envisions a society in which PWD fully and equally participate regardless of their disability so PwDs can live with dignity according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.<sup>38</sup>

ANAB: The Afghan National Association of the Blind's mission is to improve the social and economic situation of blind PwDs through education, vocational trainings, community inclusion, and self-sufficiency programs.<sup>39</sup>

ALSO: Its mission is to improve the living situation of people with disabilities, especially women and children, through education programs, advocacy activities, psychosocial services, and vocational trainings.<sup>40</sup>

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35 Arasta Harshoon. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interviews – Tawanmandi. Kabul, Afghanistan, (30 Jun. 2013)

36 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

37 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

38 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

39 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

40 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

ANAD: It is the only organization which serves to the afghan deaf and being controlled by deaf people. ANAD's mission is to provide PwDs with social activities, as well as financial and cultural support..<sup>41</sup>

FWF: It's mission is the welfare and self-sufficiency of PwDs and their families. They provide education courses, vocational training, and health education.<sup>42</sup>

As it can be seen, there is a wide variety of mandates among organizations. In order to capitalize on this strength, it is important to increase cooperation between organizations to create synergy.

## II. Programmatic Support to develop the capacity of Afghan CSOs to advance issues related to the disability sector

Research findings also show that there is significant programmatic support to advance issues related to the disability sector including capacity building. For example, Tawanmandi supports the Community Centre for the Disabled (CCD) to strengthen its organizational operating capacities and mainstream disability as a cross cutting issue.<sup>43</sup> WFP supported ANAB to improve its operations by providing them with computers and trainings to solve administrative issues. Handicap International (HI) provided CCD with capacity building, program design, funding support, expertise, and employment opportunities for PwDs.<sup>44</sup> CCD also provides support to Community Service Organizations (CSOs) to improve their outreach efforts for PwDs.<sup>45</sup>

To capitalize on this strength, it is critical that further programmatic support is provided to local CSOs to maximize the impact of activities for PwDs and partners.

## III. Wide range of programs that support PwDs in their different needs including social inclusion, awareness raising, economic empowerment, rehabilitation, accessibility, and education.

Similar to the the wide range of mandates that exist across organizations, there is a diverse number of programs that support their inclusion. Below is a sample of the programs highlighted by several organizations:

- SERVE's EMAD project began in an eye-hospital in Peshawar, Pakistan, helping the blind with orientation and mobility. The project expanded to include educational and vocational assistance.<sup>46</sup>
- ANAB association offers computer courses, knitting jackets, brush making, and weaving seats.<sup>47</sup>
- The Red Crescent and Red Cross in Kabul also offers surgery for PwDs and prosthetic limbs to support

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41 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

42 Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

43 Arasta Harshoon. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interviews – Tawanmandi. Kabul, Afghanistan, (30 Jun. 2013)

44 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 15 – 16.

45 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 18.

46 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

47 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).



the mobility of PwDs. They also provide vocational trainings and literacy classes.<sup>48</sup>

- CCD offers vocational trainings, literacy classes, community awareness raising programs, advocacy activities, and it also supports PwDs through employment services.<sup>49</sup>
- ALSO offers advocacy activities for PwDs. they also fund activities to improve mobility including building ramps at schools, mosques, and educational institutions to make them accessible for people who move on wheelchairs.
- HI offers physical rehabilitation services.<sup>50</sup>
- ANAD created a school for the hearing impaired which includes a sign language program, support for mental deficiencies, kinder garden classes, and vocational trainings in bag sewing, carpentry, tailoring, and mechanics. They also published a sign language dictionary with 2000 words.<sup>51</sup>
- FWF established a high school in 2004. It graduated 45 students in 4 four periods. 35 of them have gone to universities. The school has 350 student and more than 100 of them are girls. FWF provides vocational and professional trainings, sign language classes, social activities and created a health clinic for the hearing impaired.<sup>52</sup>

As it can be seen the wide and diverse range of projects implemented to support PwDs and address their needs in a holistic way. To capitalize on this strength, it is critical to increase cooperation between organizations to create synergy between programs and avoid duplication of efforts.

#### IV. Wide range of programs that are inclusive of all stakeholders related the needs of PwDs.

Research findings show that there is a wide range of programs that are inclusive of all relevant stakeholders that work in the disability sector. For instance, SERVE's EMAD project targets people with disabilities, their families, community leaders, government officials, school administrators, teachers, non-governmental organizations and DPOs in Kabul and Parwan provinces.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, ANAB obtained funding from the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan to organize PwDs' second congress.<sup>54</sup> CCD works with a wide range of stakeholders including government ministries, DPOs, CSOs, families of PwDs, community leaders, and donors to serve the needs of PwDs.<sup>55</sup> Thus, by including all relevant stakeholders, all organizations involved remain engaged and synergy is created to maximize impact for the benefit of PwDs. In order to capitalize over this strength, it is important to increase cooperation between organizations to create synergy and avoid duplication of efforts.

#### V. Long history of CSOs working for the empowerment of PwDs in Afghanistan.

There is a long history and institutional memory from the part of disability organizations working in

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48 Haidi Mohammad. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

49 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 15.

50 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

51 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

52 Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

53 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

54 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

55 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 25 - 29.

Afghanistan. For example, Handicap International has been working with Afghan refugees in refugee camps in Peshawar since the 1980's, and moved its operations to Afghanistan in 1996.<sup>56</sup> FWF was established in 1994.<sup>57</sup> AABRAR has a history of more than 2 decades managing effective development programs for PwDs.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, ANAB and CCD were both established in 2004.<sup>59,60</sup> In addition to serving a large number of PwDs over the years, the long-term presence and history of these organizations also strengthen the disability sector as organizational skills are developed and lessons learned can be incorporated into new programs to maximize impact. To capitalize on this strength, it is critical that knowledge is shared, especially between organizations with long-term presence and new ones to build the institutional capacity of the disability sector.

#### VI. Experienced organizations have a large geographical outreach although it is primarily focused on key urban areas

In addition to having a long history, organizations working in the disability sector also have a significant geographical coverage. For example, AABRAR has two main operational centers in Kabul and Jalalabad each one employs approximately 40 staff and sub-offices in 17 provinces including Laghman, Kunar, Nooristan, Kapisa, Parwan, Panjsher, Baghlan, Kunduz, Takhar, Balkh, Samangan, Ghazni, Paktika, Paktiya, Khost, Logar and Kandahar.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, ALSO has operations in Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif.<sup>62</sup> Handicap International has presence in Kabul, Herat, and Kandahar.<sup>63</sup> The fact that most organizations have a large footprint in the country is a significant advantage for PwDs as the services provided to them become more accessible. However, it is important to mention that most services are focused in the main urban areas. Because of the volatile security situation, many districts are not covered. Thus, organizations must look for mechanisms to engage districts adjacent to urban areas to expand the geographical reach of their services.

#### VII. Organizations try to outreach and accommodate to the specific needs of PwDs.

There are some organizations whose outreach efforts to deliver services to PwDs are significant. For example, FWF has been broadcasting sign language programs via Noor television for 2.5 years.<sup>64</sup> AABRAR has well-established physiotherapy clinics with male and female sections and both male and female professionals provide community services in people's homes when the movement of the PwD is severely restricted.<sup>65</sup> However, similar to the point made above, most of the visits only occur in urban areas as many districts are not accessible due to the fragile security situation. Thus, organizations must aim at providing services at home for those PwDs whose

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56 Handicap International. "Our Work in Afghanistan," *Afghanistan* ([http://www.handicap-international.fr/en/discover-hi/around-the-world0/more-than-60-programmes-in-the/programs/afghanistan/our-work-in-afghanistan/?dechi\\_programmes%5Bselpays%5D=412](http://www.handicap-international.fr/en/discover-hi/around-the-world0/more-than-60-programmes-in-the/programs/afghanistan/our-work-in-afghanistan/?dechi_programmes%5Bselpays%5D=412)), 30 Jun. 2013.

57 Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

58 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

59 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

60 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 15.

61 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

62 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

63 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

64 Ibid.

65 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

disabilities do not permit them to travel.

#### VIII. Strong inter-agency collaboration to support PwDs.

Research findings show that there is a significant inter-agency collaboration to support PwDs. In fact, the spokesperson for the Wolisi Jirga mentions that one of the key strengths of the disability sector is the degree of inter-agency activity to establish unions and associations to advance the rights of PwDs.<sup>66</sup> FWF mentioned that they participated in the development of the Afghanistan National Disability Plan in coordination with other organizations.<sup>67</sup> Regarding service delivery, AABRAR refers PwDs to ICRC if they need prosthetic limbs or other devices to support the rehabilitation of PwDs.<sup>68</sup>

In addition to having a strong inter-agency collaboration for service delivery, organizations active in the disability sector also show significant cooperation for advocacy purposes. For example, the Advocacy Committee for People with Disabilities (ACPD) is comprised of many relevant stakeholders. Similarly, the Disability Stakeholders Coordination Group (DSCG) is composed by a large number of organizations active in the disability sector.<sup>69</sup> CCD has high levels of engagement with the Federation of DPOs, its Partner Organizations, DPOs, and Schools.<sup>70</sup> ANDAP also participates in political leadership meetings for the new presidential elections and attends workshops of national and international organizations.<sup>71</sup>

The fact that there is a strong inter-agency cooperation is a significant strength. It creates synergy between projects, serves the needs of PwDs in a holistic way, advances the rights of PwDs, and it also prevents duplication of efforts. Thus, it is critical that organizations maintain a high degree of cooperation.

#### IX. Existence of the Advocacy Committee and strong advocacy efforts from part of CSOs to advance the rights of PwDs.

In addition to providing services to PwDs, organizations active in the disability sector carry out significant advocacy activities to advance the rights of PwDs in coordination with the Advocacy Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities (ACPD).<sup>72</sup> For example, ALSO advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities based on the UN Conventions and national laws and provide services for persons with disabilities. These include organizing workshops, seminars, conferences, public awareness campaigns, carrying out public petitions, and conduct face to face meetings with Government authorities and MPs, They also broadcast radio, TV spots, and organize press releases.<sup>73</sup>

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66 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

67 Siyawash Payab. Ghulumsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

68 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

69 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

70 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD’s Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 38.

71 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulumsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

72 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. “Afghanistan and CRPD continue,” *Promoting the Victim Assistance in the framework of CRPD* ([http://www.clusterconvention.org/files/2013/04/III-MNM-VA-and-CRPD-in-Afghanistan-April-2013-Geneva\\_15042013.pdf](http://www.clusterconvention.org/files/2013/04/III-MNM-VA-and-CRPD-in-Afghanistan-April-2013-Geneva_15042013.pdf); Apr. 2013), 24 Sep. 2013.

73 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

Similarly, other organizations and working groups such as the DSCG also has significant advocacy activities. In fact, the actions of the group were critical for the UNCRDP approval. Thus, it is key that the ACPD is strengthened and its activities carefully planned in close coordination with other relevant stakeholders to advance the rights of PwDs in a holistic way.<sup>74</sup>

#### X. Programs implemented by CSOs provide financial assistance to PwDs.

One of the key strengths of most programs implemented by CSOs within the disability sector is the provision of free courses<sup>75</sup> and financial assistance to beneficiaries. A beneficiary reports that she receives 100,000 Afghanis per month from AABRAR which she uses to pay for her personal expenses and transportation to the organization's center.<sup>76</sup> Similarly, CCD's economic empowerment programs also provide beneficiaries with financial assistance to pay for transportation costs.<sup>77</sup> This not only addresses one of the key needs of beneficiaries – economic hardship – but it also provides an incentive for beneficiaries to continue attending CBR programs. Thus, it is key that organizations continue providing financial assistance to beneficiaries.

#### 4.1.3. Micro-level

##### I. Commitment to raise social awareness about peoples with disabilities' rights

There is a strong commitment from the part of organizations to raise social awareness about PwDs' rights and contributions. This translates into having more tolerant views about PwDs. For example, in addition of funding CCD, Tawanmandi also funds a media project through a local NGO that broadcast different awareness programs on the rights of people with disabilities and human rights.<sup>78</sup> Similarly, the AICHR monitors the advancement of PwDs rights and organizes advocacy and public awareness campaigns for PwDs.<sup>79</sup> CCD published the new year calendar explaining each article of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and distributes it to local organizations and other government agencies.<sup>80</sup> ANAD provides information about the rights of the hearing impaired to the community at large.<sup>81</sup> Through these activities, the social stigma associated with disability is challenged opening opportunities for the empowerment of PwDs.

##### II. Commitment from the part of PwDs to participate in empowerment programs including education.

There is a strong commitment from the part of PwDs to engage in programs that support and empower them. For

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74 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23 Aug. 2013)

75 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

76 Zahra. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

77 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 19.

78 Arasta Harshoon. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interviews – Tawanmandi. Kabul, Afghanistan, (30 Jun. 2013)

79 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

80 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

81 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

example, SERVE's EMAD project graduated more than 5000 students from schools and vocational trainings.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, ANAB mentions that 512 eligible PwDs are registered to the Ministry of Social Work and the UN in order to be supported. In collaboration with WFP, ANAB provides trainings for the visually impaired.<sup>83</sup> The interest in participating in empowerment programs is echoed by Mr. Mohammad Sajim Pardiss who mentioned that *“there is motivation amongst people with disabilities.”*<sup>84</sup> Mr. Sajim received training on English, computer, proposal writing, and braille lines. Another beneficiary mentioned that she also participated in programs with AARBAR that were designed specifically for PwDs and was able to becoming meaningfully employed at the same organization upon graduation.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, Mr. Moheeb Rahman is attending a school run by FWF for the hearing impaired.<sup>86</sup> Thus, if opportunities are given to PwDs, the latter have the motivation to benefit from them. The fact that PwDs are actively engaging in programs and activities is a significant strength for the disability sector. Their interest maximizes the impact of programs and increases the contributions that PwDs can make.

### III. Programs that target mobility issues are being implemented.

One of the key constraints that PwDs face is mobility. However, there are organizations that actively address mobility related problems in an innovative way. For example, the MoWA built ramps in the women's garden to ensure that female PwDs could access it.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, AABRAR mentions that many children in rural areas are hindered from attending school due to their mobility problems. It helps children access education through literacy and numeracy classes and measures to increase confidence. It provides them with bicycles to increase their mobility. It is also working on facilitating access to buildings and other facilities such as schools, universities, hospitals, markets, sports grounds, and parks. AABRAR builds ramps to facilitate PwDs' access and provides training and awareness raising to people from the vicinity, school, or office.<sup>88</sup> The fact that organizations are committed to facilitate access and mobility is a significant achievement as they are two key obstacles that prevent PwDs from actively engaging with society.

### IV. Follow up programs to support PwDs' employment are being implemented.

Employment opportunities are limited for PwDs. On one hand, it is product of low levels of education. On the other hand, it is also related to issues of discrimination. However, organizations such as CCD and AABRAR offer services to facilitate access to sustainable employment.<sup>89,90</sup> AABRAR has deployed an innovative program to improve access to jobs by introducing a job search and business training component to all of its vocational training courses. They also hired a labor market officer to network with potential employers to ease the transition process for PwDs.<sup>91</sup>

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82 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

83 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

84 Mohammad Sajim Pardiss. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013)

85 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

86 Moheeb Rahman. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

87 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

88 Abdul Baseer. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

89 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 40 - 47.

90 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

91 Ibid.

## V. Economic empowerment including basic education and vocational trainings implemented by CSOs achieve intended goals.

Research findings show that Economic empowerment activities achieve the goal of raising the living standards of beneficiaries and their families.<sup>92</sup> In fact, evidence points at the fact that vocational training and basic literacy increase beneficiaries' ability to pursue an independent economic activity. Male beneficiaries who pursued vocational trainings established businesses after graduation. Females whose level of education is low and pursue vocational training, often take the training as a career. In other words, women with lower levels of education see economic empowerment programs as a viable opportunity to pursue sustainable employment.<sup>93</sup> Mr Hiadi Mohammad, a former CCD beneficiary mentions that he attended a tailoring training for six months. After graduation he established a business and now he has six trainees himself to whom he teaches tailoring. He receives sufficient income to sustain his family and himself. It is a similar situation with other beneficiaries. Razia, a former beneficiary from AABRAR, was hired by the organization upon graduating from its programs.<sup>94</sup> ANAD implements bag sewing, carpentry, carpet sewing and other programs. The goods produced during the workshops are sold once a month at Bagram Airbase providing PwDs with income.<sup>95</sup>

## VI. CBR Programs and activities increase beneficiaries' self-esteem and promotes self-sufficiency.

In addition to achieving the goal of empowering PwDs economically, vocational trainings and literacy classes also increase the self-image of male beneficiaries if the latter achieves the objective of attaining economic self-sufficiency. Similarly, the self-image of female beneficiaries who launched businesses or attained sustainable employment also increases as they become financially independent and contribute to the well-being of their families.<sup>96</sup> For example, female beneficiary reported to have an increased self-esteem from participating in AARBAR's program. Because of her increased self-esteem, she ignores the harassment and bullying she experiences at school allowing to continue her studies.<sup>97</sup> ANAD pointed out that many hearing impaired students participate in cricket activities. They have traveled to tournaments in the UAE and India increasing PwDs' self-esteem.<sup>98</sup> Thus, in addition to pursuing sustainable employment, the benefits of CBR programs compound the benefits as it increases the self-image of beneficiaries.<sup>99</sup>

## VII. Evidence that PwDs are hired by other PwDs who are running organizations.

Economic empowerment activities do not only help beneficiaries attain financial independence, but they also provide employment opportunities to other PwDs. In fact, there's a vibrant job market for PwDs among

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92 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 20.

93 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 40 - 47.

94 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

95 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

96 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 35 - 40.

97 Shogofa. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

98 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

99 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 27 - 28.

organizations that work in the disability sector.<sup>100</sup> The latter is the largest employer of PwDs. For example, 10 of FWF's high school graduates are now working as teachers in the same schools.<sup>101</sup> ANAD is an organization that is run by the hearing impaired exclusively.<sup>102</sup> CCD is an independent Afghan NGO and 80% of its total staff are PwDs. Similarly, AABRAR also hires graduates from its programs to work in the organization either by becoming trainers, or by being directly engaged in manufacturing bags and other fashion items.<sup>103</sup><sup>104</sup> ORMDA also hires some of its beneficiaries in different roles including messengers to deliver letters and packages.<sup>105</sup><sup>106</sup> Furthermore, many PwDs who pursue businesses after graduation often hire other PwDs as they expand their businesses as the cases of Farzana and Hiadi Mohammad, two CCD beneficiaries, can illustrate.<sup>107</sup><sup>108</sup>

It is important to recognize that employment generation among PwDs is also a product of the strong relationships that organizations have with PwD led micro-enterprises in the private sector including tailors, mobile repair shops, and carpentry shops.<sup>109</sup> In sum, the strong relationship with micro-enterprises active in the informal economy are definitely responsible for facilitating the employment of low-skilled PwDs.<sup>110</sup>

#### VIII. Awareness raising activities sensitize communities and show that they can increase acceptance and support of PwDs.

Evidence shows that awareness raising activities sensitize communities and increase the acceptance of PwDs within their own communities. For example, CCD and other organizations rely significantly on community volunteers to liaise with the community.<sup>111</sup> Oftentimes community volunteers are not disabled but have been exposed to awareness raising activities increasing their willingness to assist PwDs.

#### IX. Skills developed by beneficiaries of programs are sustainable

In addition empowering economically, there is evidence that some of the skills learned during the vocational trainings and literacy classes are sustainable. This is especially true for those who pursued tailoring training, carpentry, or computer courses. The high rate of growth in these trades, as well as the high levels of employment registered by high-skilled beneficiaries through job placement programs can illustrate this point.<sup>112</sup> Thus, the

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- 100 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)
- 101 Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).
- 102 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)
- 103 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).
- 104 Shogofa. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).
- 105 Abdul Khalil. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).
- 106 Abul Sabur. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).
- 107 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).
- 108 Haidi Mohammad. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).
- 109 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 19.
- 110 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 40.
- 111 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 20.
- 112 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.”

trainings are relevant and increase the economic well-being of beneficiaries as there is market demand for the skills learned during the training programs. However, it is important to revise training curriculums periodically to ensure that the skills remain relevant to the market place. It is also important to advocate for the creation of infrastructure that facilitates the mobility of PwDs to further increase their access to meaningful employment where they can apply these skills.

## 4.2. Weaknesses

### 4.2.1. Macro-Level

#### I. Lack of cooperation between Ministries and NGOs

Research findings show that there is a lack of cooperation between Ministries and CSOs in the areas of capacity building and coordination. For example, the AABRAR team has well qualified trainers who provide awareness trainings communities about the benefits that making their premises accessible to PwDs can bring to their institutions.<sup>113</sup> However, the MoEd has repeatedly stated that there are a lack of trainers within government institutions to advance the right of accessibility for PwDs.<sup>114</sup> This suggests that, even though, AABRAR has the capacity to carry out such trainings, resources between NGOs and the government are not shared reducing the effectiveness of projects.<sup>115</sup>

Similarly, the DPO's federation that is being organized by both DPOs and MoLSAM is dysfunctional at the moment reducing collaboration between local stakeholders at the macro-level.<sup>116</sup> The DPO federation which is intended to become a coordinating body for institutions involved in the disability sector negatively impact the ability of DPOs to advance the rights of PwDs at the policy level. Disagreements over the leadership is the primary obstacle that prevents the DPO's federation from becoming a functional institution. This point was also raised by the AICHR who mentioned that despite the fact that there are 120 DPOs, none of them have the power to organize the union of DPOs.<sup>117</sup>

#### II. Lack of human resources and technology at the ministerial and organizational to address the needs of PwDs.

Lack of resources and materials at the ministerial, organizational, and individual level is a weaknesses that is present at the macro and meso levels. However, this deficiency is categorized as a macro-level weakness given the fact that the government is the institution responsible for budgeting and policy making to empower PwDs. For instance, MoLSAM mentioned that there is a lack of qualified professionals to staff the directorate of

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(Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 34.

113 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

114 Abdul Mateen Jafar. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level – MoED. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

115 Abdul Baseer. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

116 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD’s Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 17.

117 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)



disability at the ministry. Candidates often lack the necessary skills to address the needs of PwDs.<sup>118</sup> The MofEd mentioned that there is a limited number of professional teachers that can cater to the needs of PwDs. They pointed out that there is not enough personnel to address the needs of PwDs nor materials for their empowerment.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, the Ministry of Public Health mentioned that the lack of qualified professionals and lack of skills is one of the key weaknesses of the sector.<sup>120</sup> The MoWA stated that the quality of the prosthesis is deficient which reduces PwD's mobility.<sup>121</sup> In fact, a female beneficiary reports that even though she attends school, she faces significant problems for moving around the premises due to her disability and she cannot participate in presentations because she cannot write in the blackboard. The latter is a product of the lack of facilities to accommodate PwDs's needs in educational centers.<sup>122</sup> ANAD also raised the point that there are not many translators of sign language available.<sup>123</sup> This suggests a lack of budget as well as coordination between government agencies and a policy making failure as the government cannot produce the materials and personnel to address the needs of PwDs.<sup>124</sup> This constraint was also expressed by SERVE who mentioned that lack of sign language teachers and translators in the Ministries of Higher Education and MofEd is one of the main reasons behind limited educational opportunities for PwDs.<sup>125</sup>

The lack of qualified professionals was also expressed by Mohammad Sajim Pardiss who mentioned that many people with serious visual impairments can travel independently using a wide range of tools and techniques. However, the lack of orientation and mobility professionals who are specifically trained to help people with visual impairments, prevent blind PwDs from accessing the necessary resources to become self-reliant. Another failure at the policy level includes the lack of access to technologies such as screen readers, screen magnifiers, and refreshable Braille displays which enable the blind to use mainstream computer applications and mobile phones.<sup>126</sup>

AARBAR also mentioned that there is a lack of male and female physiotherapist to send to the clinics to help people with disabilities.<sup>127</sup> This translates into limited access to health programs for PwDs which negatively impact their access to high quality healthcare. In sum, it is critical that the government prioritizes careers that cater to the needs of PwDs at the policy level to ensure that enough qualified professionals are available to empower them.

### III. Lack of sustainable budget from the part of government agencies to strengthen the position of oversight institutions to support PwDs

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118 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

119 Abdul Mateen Jafar. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level – MoED. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

120 Dr. Musa Zia. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Public Health. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

121 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

122 Shogofa. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

123 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

124 Abdul Mateen Jafar. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level – MoED. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

125 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

126 Mohammad Sajim Pardiss. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013)

127 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

The primary weakness about the disability sector as expressed by MoLSAM,<sup>128</sup> AIHRC,<sup>129</sup> the Ministry of Public Health,<sup>130</sup> the MoWA,<sup>131</sup> and other organizations, is the lack of sustainable funding from the Afghan government and its continued dependency on international donors. This has significant repercussion for the empowerment of PwDs as it diminishes the ability of organization's to fulfill their mandates. It limits resources available for the development of professionals that can cater to the needs of PwDs. It also impact negatively the ability of government agencies and organizations to implement the NAPD. The MoPH mentioned that they raised the lack of funding as a key issue with donors, but their request for increased funding were not taken into consideration.<sup>132</sup> The MoWA mentioned that they do not even have a specialized budget line to implement programs that support female PwDs specifically.<sup>133</sup> ANAD mentioned that they had to cut their staff by 25% due to a reduction in funding and the MofEd often fails to pay on time the salaries of teachers at the school for the hearing impaired.<sup>134</sup> Thus, it is critical that this shortcoming is addressed to ensure that sufficient resources are available for the empowerment of PwDs.

#### IV. Lack of capacity to improve reporting of M&E findings and program achievements.

A significant constraint faced by government agencies is the lack of capacity in several areas. In the previous section it was discussed how the lack of technical staff that are trained on the needs of PwDs impact issues of mobility and accessibility to healthcare services. However, AICHR also identified the need to increase the capacity of government officials in reporting and M&E.<sup>135</sup> The lack of capacity in these two areas negatively impact the government's ability to outreach to communities, increase awareness among communities about the rights of PwDs and services available to them, and to evaluate the impact of projects. The latter is concerning given that if achievements are reported mistakenly and M&E findings and figures show discrepancies, donors will have a limited ability to assess the outcomes of the programs they fund. It can translate into the cancellation of programs at the expense of PwDs. Thus, it is critical that capacity building in this area is built and that short-term advisers are hired to improve reporting and M&E findings. This includes tapping into the CTAP program which provides a venue for hiring short-term international advisers to strengthen the internal structures of government ministries.<sup>136</sup>

#### V. Despite of having a legal mandate and political commitment to advance the rights of PwDs, the issue has not been a priority for all government agencies.

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128 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

129 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

130 Dr. Musa Zia. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Public Health. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

131 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

132 Ibid.

133 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

134 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

135 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

136 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *The Civilian Technical Assistance Programme (CTAP)*, (Kabul, Afghanistan: Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Aug. 2010).

As it was previously mentioned, one of the key strengths about the disability sector is the strong legal mandate and large number of laws enacted that support the empowerment of PwDs. However, despite the fact that the law requires government agencies to prioritize the needs of PwDs. There are different levels of interest and engagement across government agencies. For example, the MoWA mentions that it has the interest to hire female PwDs but they have not taken any effort to fulfill this requirement.<sup>137</sup> AICHR and AAR Japan mentioned that there has not been any coordinated action from the part of the government to build the foundation of disability sector. The majority of the work is performed by NGOs but their capacity for outreach and service delivery is limited and funding is unsustainable.<sup>138</sup><sup>139</sup> Thus there is the need for advocacy actions to standardize the implementation of laws that support PwDs across government agencies.

#### VI. The government is unable to provide assistance to PwDs.

Similar to the point made above, the government is unable to provide assistance to PwDs without the intervention of NGOs. AARJapan mentioned that, even though, the country has been making positive steps towards recovery, the government is still unable to offer assistance.<sup>140</sup> The areas where intervention is needed include taking responsibility for mine clearance and offering services such as specialized health and education. Thus, it is critical that a comprehensive plan for government action is devised to strengthen the disability sector at the macro-level.

#### VII. Lack of Employment opportunities within the government despite of existing disability laws.

Within the ANDP and Disability law, there is a legal mandate for all government ministries to allocate 3% of the total vacancies available for PwDs. The latter is a strategy to promote employment and sustainable livelihoods. However, despite of the legal mandate, few government offices have actually complied with the requirement. Farzana, a CCD beneficiary, mentions that employment opportunities within the government are non-existing.<sup>141</sup> This point is echoed during the Focus Group for beneficiaries,<sup>142</sup> and by ANAB who mentions that government agencies do not prioritize the hiring of PwDs, and in some instances, it takes months to disburse their salaries.<sup>143</sup> Thus, it is critical that advocacy efforts are coordinated for the proper implementation of the disability law.

#### VIII. Limited outreach to PwDs from the part of the government.

Research findings show that there is a significant gap regarding government outreach's efforts towards PwDs. In fact, a common complaint among beneficiaries and organizations, including the MoWA, was the limited

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137 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

138 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

139 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

140 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

141 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

142 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23 Aug. 2013)

143 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

information received from the part of the government.<sup>144</sup> For example, three beneficiaries expressed that they have never received any information regarding PwDs and the services available for them.<sup>145</sup><sup>146</sup><sup>147</sup> Another PwD expressed a similar complaint. She mentions that the government “*does not help handicapped women.*”<sup>148</sup> All information and services that PwDs have received have been through NGOs and other entities. These points are also found in evidence provided by ANAB.<sup>149</sup> It is important to mention that the Wolisi Jirga has already taken steps to ameliorate this situation as they have been in conversations with the Ministry of Culture and information about creating programs specifically designed for PwDs.<sup>150</sup>

The limited outreach from the part of the government comes from two different sources. One is the lack of capacity from the part of government entities and the lack of funding. The most important reason, however, is that the government does not have the ability to adequately deliver services to PwDs.<sup>151</sup> In fact, as it was previously mentioned, the responsibility for addressing the needs for PwDs has so far rested in the shoulders of DPOs, NGOs, and CSOs. Thus, there is the need to conduct a thorough review of the government strategies to ensure that the engagement between PwDs and the government increases.

#### IX. Weak policy implementation and confusion of responsibilities among government agencies.

Despite the fact that there are specialized units within government agencies and that there is a strong policy framework to support PwDs, there is weak policy implementation<sup>152</sup> and confusion of responsibilities among government agencies.<sup>153</sup> In fact, the spokesperson for the Wolisi Jirga mentioned that they have been active at promoting legislation that advances the rights of PwDs, but there is no specific agency to implement them.<sup>154</sup> A similar concern was expressed by MoLSAM who mentioned that the legal framework is strong but there are limited efforts in regards to implementation and follow up.<sup>155</sup> Another example is the ANDAP policy framework

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144 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

145 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

146 Haidi Mohammad. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

147 Moheeb Rahman. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

148 Shogofa. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

149 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

150 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

151 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

152 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)

153 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

154 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

155 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

which expired in 2008 but it wasn't renewed by parliament as it is currently under revision.<sup>156</sup><sup>157</sup> FWF pointed out that although most activities related to PwDs are implemented by MoLSAM, there are other ministries who share responsibility but they are unwilling to take action to support PwDs.<sup>158</sup> This suggests a significant weakness within the MoLSAM who is tasked with representing PwDs as it did not carry out sufficient lobbying for the approval of the law.

A second concern is the lack of specific responsibilities and TORs for government agencies. For example, physical rehabilitation programs should fall under the authority of the MoPH as it is the agency that has the capacity and expertise to address public health issues. However, it falls within the structure of MoLSAM whose capacity and expertise regarding health is limited.<sup>159</sup> It is a similar case with the training of physical rehabilitation professionals. At the moment, these fall under the responsibility of MoLSAM while the ministry responsible for building the skills and capacity of Afghans is the Ministry of Higher Education.<sup>160</sup>

In a similar case, the Ministry of Economy established programs for the economic empowerment of PwDs. However, other ministries, especially MoLSAM, did not know about the program.<sup>161</sup> This shows as significant disconnection at the policy level and a lack of effective inter-ministerial coordination for the implementation of policies and programs. Thus, it is critical that a review of coordination mechanisms is conducted and a task force group is created to monitor progress and standardize procedures.

#### X. Lack of standardization for training curriculum and teaching methodologies.

Research findings show that there is a lack of standardization of training curriculums. Under the National Capacity Building Program where a set of priorities and skill sets for TVET programs are designed, MoLSAM developed training curriculum for PwDs. However, there is no standardization of teaching methodologies nor curriculum.<sup>162</sup> This translates into ad-hoc arrangements for the implementation of trainings and wide divergence between the quality of trainings. Thus, it is key that training curriculums become homogeneous and that certain minimum standards for learning are defined at the policy level.

#### XI. Despite the fact that the UNCRPD article 29 codifies the right to political participation of PwDs, GoIRA lacks the capacity to ensure that these right is exercised by PwDs.

As it was previously mentioned in the strengths section, article 29 of the UNCRPD codifies the right to political participation of PwDs. Despite the fact that the Convention was ratified by GoIRA, effective mechanisms to ensure that this right is exercised by PwDs are nonexistent. For example, a female beneficiary points that she wasn't able to vote during the parliamentary elections because she did not know anything about the candidates as she lacked information about them. However, she did exercise her right to vote during the presidential

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156 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

157 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. “Afghanistan and CRPD continue,” *Promoting the Victim Assistance in the framework of CRPD* ([http://www.clusterconvention.org/files/2013/04/III-MNM-VA-and-CRPD-in-Afghanistan-April-2013-Geneva\\_15042013.pdf](http://www.clusterconvention.org/files/2013/04/III-MNM-VA-and-CRPD-in-Afghanistan-April-2013-Geneva_15042013.pdf); Apr. 2013), 24 Sep. 2013.

158 Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

159 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

160 Ibid.

161 Ibid.

162 Ibid.

election.<sup>163</sup> This case shows that one of the key deterrents for political participation is the lack of information and outreach from the part of the government which will be discussed in following sections. Other factors include transportation and accessibility. The lack of reliable transport methods can impair PwDs from exercising this right because most PwDs live in rural areas but the polls are usually in the district centers. Thus, PwDs cannot vote because they cannot travel. Similarly, some PwDs need to move in the polling centers using wheelchairs, but there are no ramps available for them in the polling stations.

In addition to facing transportation issues, PwDs who are blind or deaf also face limited opportunities to exercise their right to vote. For instance, no mechanisms are in place to ensure that the ballots also contain braille language to facilitate voting for the visually impaired. Similarly, there are no mechanisms to ensure that blind and deaf beneficiaries are assisted during the voting process. In regards to the hearing impaired, the limited outreach from the part of the government also limits the amount of information that candidates and the government can provide for PwDs. At the moment, there are no mechanisms to provide that information such as providing campaign information to PwDs via sign language or other means that facilitate exercising the right to vote of PwDs.

XII. Despite the fact that the UNCRPD article 21 codifies the right of people with disabilities to freedom of information, there are significant structural challenges to ensure PwDs' right to do so.

As it was previously mentioned, there are limited outreach efforts from the part of the government which limits the access to information that PwDs have. There are services available for PwDs, but the lack of outreach from the part of the government prevents PwDs from reaping the benefits of these programs.

In addition to limited outreach from the part of the government, lack of electricity and facilities also limit PwDs' access to information. Currently, most information is provided via mass media including television and radio. However, due to a precarious economic condition, access to electricity is limited. Thus, alternative methods to inform PwDs should be sought.

A third area of concern is the limited access that PwDs have because of lack of access to information technology including mechanisms that facilitate the interaction between computers and PwDs. For instance, similar to electricity, PwDs economic situation does not permit them to acquire a computer. Furthermore, in those areas where internet service is available for public use such as internet cafes, there are no technologies that assist the visually or hearing impaired.<sup>164</sup> Thus, it is key that centers specially designed for PwDs are implemented to ensure they can exercise their right to information.

XIII. Lack of quantitative data regarding PwDs.

Despite of carrying out the disability survey in 2004, as of 2013, there is no accurate number of PwDs in Afghanistan.<sup>165</sup> Lack of quantitative data prevents organizations and the GoIRA to have a real understanding of the percentage of the Afghan population that live with disabilities, the type of disabilities, as well as PwDs' income and education levels.<sup>166</sup> For example, the MoWA mentions that one of the key obstacles faced for

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163 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

164 Mohammad Sajim Pardiss. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013)

165 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

166 Jean Francois Trani. A New Structure in the Government of Afghanistan for the promotion of Rights for People with Disabilities: The National Disability Commission (NDC). (<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lc-ccr/lcstaff/jean-francois-trani/lcstaff/jean-francois-trani/NationalDisabilityCommission1004.pdf>; Oct. 2004), 05 Jun. 2013.

program design is the lack of data about female PwDs.<sup>167</sup> This is a critical weakness as it prevents the government and donors to develop programs and policies. This information is also important to draw baseline data for M&E purposes. Thus, it is critical that a baseline survey is implemented to update quantitative data available.

#### XIV. Disregard for psychosocial disabilities from the part of donors and disability organizations in Afghanistan

In addition to physical disabilities, there are several invisible disabilities such as psychological trauma due to the protracted war and displacement. These include depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic problems. There are also many people with learning disabilities and mental impairments. Although significant support is provided by donors to address support PwDs, psychological disabilities have been sidelined.<sup>168</sup> Because support is not provided by donors, DPOs and NGOs working in the disability sector do not provide programs to target these disabilities. Thus, to ensure that the disability sector addresses the needs of PwDs in a holistic way, it is important that donor funded programs are inclusive of psychological disabilities as well.

#### XV. Funding provided by donors for social inclusion programs is often not sufficient to make a long-lasting and sustainable impact.

A second weakness within the sector of disability include the low levels of funding to provide proper support to PwDs. For instance, in an analysis conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of CCD's economic empowerment programs, it is mentioned that the amount of money allocated to support PwD was equivalent to \$300 usd for the past five years. However, during the same period of time, inflation in Afghanistan was significant. Thus, as prices in Kabul rose, the purchasing power of organizations decreased and, as a consequence, also the impact of programs. In fact, a beneficiary complained that the quality of the goods provided at the end of the programs to pursue an economic activity are of low quality because of the limited amount provided by donors. This limits their ability to pursue self-employment as the equipment provided is often deficient.<sup>169</sup> Another female beneficiary expressed the same complaint when she mentioned that the quality of the goods provided by organizations was not ideal because of limited funding.<sup>170</sup> Evidence also shows that those beneficiaries who receive seed grants or micro-loans to start businesses after graduating from vocational courses are the ones who have been able to attain economic self-sufficiency. The impact of vocational trainings for those who do not receive economic support is almost negligible.<sup>171</sup> Thus, it is key that resources to provide PwDs with seed grants are considered to maximize the impact of donor funded projects and fulfill the goal of helping PwDs attain self sufficiency.

#### XVI. Limited role of the UN in the disability sector

Another weakness identified is the limited involvement of the United Nations in the disability sector. This finding came to light during the focus groups and the desk research.<sup>172173</sup> The UN has played a key role in the

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167 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

168 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)

169 Zahra. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

170 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

171 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 24.

172 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)

delivery of aid to the Afghan population, as well as coordinating the political processes. In fact, the UN has been the main coordinating body through cluster meetings in Afghanistan. In regards to PwDs, the UN is the main body that issued and ratified the CRPD framework.

Despite of their leading role, their involvement in the disability sector is minimal. This translates into limited coordination between agencies and weak policy implementation between donors and the government as PwDs are not perceived as a priority in the political process.<sup>174</sup> Thus, it is key that advocacy efforts are aimed at increasing the role of the United Nations in the disability sector to perform the role of enforcer, policy adviser, and as a coordinating body to ensure that the concerns of the disability sector are mainstreamed in the political agenda and development priorities of the country.

#### 4.2.2 Meso-Level

##### I. Limited Number of Local Organizations working in the disability sector.

Given the large number of NGOs registered in Afghanistan, the size of the disability sector is relatively small. In fact, Tawamandi, an organization that supports local CSOs, mentioned they received only few applications from a local organizations that worked in the field of disability. In contrast, they received a large number of proposals of organizations working on gender and women issues.<sup>175</sup> Thus, it is critical that further support is provided to nurture the growth of organizations that cater to the needs of PwDs as the number of PwDs grows steadily due to war related injuries.

##### II. Need for more effective advocacy programs to improve society's perceptions and government's responsiveness to the needs of PwDs.

Coordinated advocacy efforts have proven to be successful. For example, the ratification of the UNCRPD was a joint effort of DPOs and NGOs active in the sector of disability.<sup>176</sup> However, to advance the rights of PwDs and ensure that their needs are met, it is critical that other issues are raised. These include the consideration of PwDs with psychological disabilities, the reorganization of responsibilities among different ministries to ensure that the programs they oversee fall within their mandate, increase accessibility of public buildings and other facilities, standardize curriculums, ensure that policies that support PwDs such as the implementation of the 3% mandate are executed, and continuous awareness raising campaigns are also needed to ensure that communities become more sensitive to the needs of PwDs. In short, there is the need for effective coordination between organizations active in the disability sector to advance some of the issues described.

##### III. Projects that support PwDs are unsustainable and limited in geographical coverage.

One of the concerns expressed during the research is the limited geographical coverage and lack of sustainability

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173 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. "Afghanistan and CRPD continue," *Promoting the Victim Assistance in the framework of CRPD* ([http://www.clusterconvention.org/files/2013/04/III-MNM-VA-and-CRPD-in-Afghanistan-April-2013-Geneva\\_15042013.pdf](http://www.clusterconvention.org/files/2013/04/III-MNM-VA-and-CRPD-in-Afghanistan-April-2013-Geneva_15042013.pdf); Apr. 2013), 24 Sep. 2013.

174 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23 Aug. 2013)

175 Arasta Harshoon. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interviews – Tawanmandi. Kabul, Afghanistan, (30 Jun. 2013)

176 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).



of projects that focus on PwDs.<sup>177</sup> AICHR and AAR Japan mentioned that the majority of projects focus on the main districts but especially key urban areas.<sup>178,179</sup> In fact FWF, is only present in Kabul province.<sup>180</sup> One of the reasons behind such limited scope is the fact that many districts are inaccessible due to the security situation. However, given the fact that it is estimated that 80% of PwDs live in rural areas, the actual reach of donor funded projects is minimal. This finding is also echoed in a report that analyzed the impact of CCD's economic empowerment activities.<sup>181</sup> Thus, it is critical that new mechanisms are sought to reach PwDs living in the districts.

In addition to the limited geographical outreach a second concern is the lack of sustainability of projects that target PwDs. For instance, the majority of the programs are financed through contributions from the international community. However, the foundations for a disability sector that is self-sustaining are not present. This translates into high degree of uncertainty for both NGOs, DPOs, and beneficiaries. The lack of sustainability threatens the ability of organizations to continue providing services to PwDs in the long-run. Thus, it is necessary that new approaches including market based funding are devised to ensure that programs that support PwDs are available for years to come and to increase their geographical scope.<sup>182</sup>

#### IV. Lack of Financial resources for CSOs to improve their effectiveness.

Another weakness identified is the lack of funding to support the operations of CSOs. For example, ANAB mentions that not having a place for office and permanent staff is one of the key challenges they face. Thus, they have to rely on volunteers as there is no room to place staff members. They have requested funds and government support to build a new office but without success.<sup>183</sup> Thus, it is important that donors acknowledge the fact that local organizations have limited resources and there is no room for capitalizing the organizations through grants. By allowing certain flexibility, organizations can capitalize and increase their effectiveness while reducing costs.

#### V. Lack of involvement from the Board of Directors to provide Leadership

Research findings show that there is a lack of commitment from the part of the Board of Directors. It is often the case that the board of directors is operative, but they provide limited support to the organizations. This decreases the effectiveness of local CSOs and limits the amount of oversight over the organization despite the fact that under Afghan law, the board is legally responsible for all actions of the organization.<sup>184</sup> Thus, it is key that government and other institutions provide capacity building to board members to ensure that they perform their duties as mandated by the law.

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177 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23 Aug. 2013)

178 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

179 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

180 Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

181 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 53.

182 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

183 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level – ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

184 Ibid.

## VI. Weak linkages between CSOs in the disability sector and organizations outside of it.

Although there is a strong inter-agency cooperation between organizations working in the disability sector, their linkages outside of the disability sector are weak. For instance, organizations collaborate constantly with the private sector if the businesses are run by PwDs, but linkages between private small and medium enterprises that operate outside of the disability sector are weak. This decreases potential job opportunities for PwDs.<sup>185</sup> It also limits the opportunities for knowledge and skills transfer. If is brought into consideration that the largest employers of PwDs are CSOs active within the disability sector, but their funding and programs are not sustainable, it can deduced that employment for PwDs is also not sustainable.<sup>186</sup> Thus, it is critical that organizations active in the disability sector outreach to organizations who do not work in it.<sup>187</sup>

In addition to having weak linkages with the private sector, cooperation with landlords, business associations, the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, and the Afghan Investment Support Agency (AISA) also limit the potential employment opportunities for PwDs. Similarly, the lack of cooperation between CSOs and financial entities also decrease PwDs access to seed capital. It's been reported that competition for low-skilled positions have increased making it more difficult to place PwDs with employers under the job-placement programs.<sup>188</sup> Thus, to maximize the impact of economic empowerment activities, it is recommended that an outreach campaign is organized to strengthen relationships with other relevant stakeholders who may not be directly involved with PwDs but can provide valuable services to them.<sup>189</sup>

## VII. CBR programs often provide vocational training in trades that may not be sustainable in the long-run.

Research findings show that CBR programs often provide training in trades that may not be sustainable in the long-run. For example, in an economic study conducted to assess the sustainability of CCD's economic empowerment programs, it was discovered that many of the trainings offered were threatened by advances in technology. For example, the mobile repair training is at risk because new phones rely on android or IOS operating systems and their hardware resembles more a computer than a mobile phone. Older phones are also cheaper to buy new than to repair them. This points at a lack of knowledge about market trends outside of artisan trades.<sup>190</sup> The latter limits the potential benefits that PwDs can gain from trainings and other economic empowerment programs It also threatens the long-term sustainability of the skills learned during the trainings. Thus, it is necessary that CBR programs are redesigned in order to ensure that PwDs can become self-sufficient both in the short and long-run.

## VIII. Limited Impact of Basic Education Courses.

The fact that CSOs active in the disability sector have limited knowledge of market trends also impact basic

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185 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 34.

186 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 34.

187 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 19.

188 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 34.

189 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 19.

190 Ibid.

education courses. The latter are often designed to improve literacy but do not provide neither male nor female beneficiaries with meaningful options to pursue formal employment after completing the programs.<sup>191</sup> As a consequence, it is critical that basic education courses are combined with vocational training in low skilled but marketable trades such as drivers, guards, and mailman which will make PwDs more competitive in the labor market.<sup>192</sup>

#### 4.2.3. Micro-Level

##### I. Lack of awareness about the rights and potential contributions of PwDs among Afghan Society.

A key constraint faced by PwDs is the lack of awareness of society about the potential contributions that they can make. Afghan communities are also not knowledgeable about the rights of PwDs and how they can support them. Reasons behind the lack of awareness include the limited scope of the awareness-raising activities as the latter are primarily focused at building the capacity of PwDs' families. Therefore, more outreach is needed to spread the word among communities.<sup>193</sup> Similarly, the fact that the government has very limited outreach to both PwDs and the community is also a major reason. The lack of awareness about the rights and potential contributions that PwDs can make, severely limits them as they are victims of insults. In one instance, a beneficiary mentioned that she's been asked not to wear good clothes to weddings because she is disabled rather than recognizing the success of the PwD.<sup>194</sup> Thus, it is critical that awareness-raising activities are widened in scope by CSOs, as well as organizing advocacy activities to ensure that the government disseminates positive<sup>195</sup> information regarding PwDs through major media outlets.

##### II. Discrimination limit the potential contributions PwDs can make to society

Social discrimination against PwDs is a major weakness in the disability sector. For example, SERVE mentions that society is not respectful of PwDs and, in fact, face discrimination.<sup>196</sup> This concern was also expressed by MoLSAM who mentioned that the main threat and weakness that PwDs face is discrimination; especially women.<sup>197</sup> Discrimination due to the limited ability to communicate via sign language between PwDs and the general population, even with PwDs' family members, is also reported to be a significant problem.<sup>198</sup> A female beneficiary reports that due to her disability, she cannot find employment despite the fact that she needs income to support her mother as her relatives does not pay for their expenses.<sup>199</sup> Another beneficiary mentions that she goes to school, but one of the main challenges faced is constant harassment from the part of her peers. She also

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191 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 24.

192 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 34.

193 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

194 Ibid.

195 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

196 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

197 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

198 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

199 Zahra. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

said that she was looking for employment but no one offered her a job because of her disability<sup>200</sup> In a similar case, a male beneficiary reports having a masters degree in science and worked for the government for over 20 years. However, he became visually impaired during his adult life. Now he is victim of name calling such as “Qari” which is a derogatory terms used for blind PwDs.<sup>201</sup> Thus, although the beneficiary clearly has the knowledge and experience to contribute to the society, he is limited by the discrimination he experiences. Another female beneficiary reported she did not attend school because of cultural discrimination. She attended basic education courses and vocational training at CCD because she felt more comfortable due to the nurturing environment provided by the organization. She is now a business owner and an employer of other PwDs.<sup>202</sup>

Discrimination against PwDs was not only expressed by beneficiaries. ALSO reports that when they refer PwDs to organizations for potential employment, the candidates are rejected. The reason given is that the PwD cannot work because of his/her disability. Thus, similar to the previous point, it is critical that awareness-raising campaigns are widened in scope by CSOs and that the government leads advocacy efforts on behalf of PwDs. Advocacy for enacting anti-discrimination laws in Afghanistan may also help improve the social situation of PwDs in the country.

### III. Gender Biases Reduce the Impact of Programs that Support PwDs.

AABRAR reports that gender biases also weaken the impact of programs that support female PwDs. It is often the case that male relatives prevent women from participating in programs that will bring a tangible benefit to the PwD under the excuse that the person is a woman. This is especially true in regards to providing bicycles to women even if the latter will improve their mobility. In some instances, it is seen as non-islamic for women to ride a bicycle.<sup>203</sup> Thus, it is critical to add gender related information to awareness raising programs to improve the status of women and facilitate their access to programs that will benefit the female PwDs.

### IV. Limited means of transportation

Research findings also show that limited means of transportation are also a weakness within the disability sector. ANAD points out that transportation for the hearing impaired is challenging as they are not able to communicate their destination.<sup>204</sup> A beneficiary reports that she could not attend school as there were no reliable means for her to move around the city, and public transit is not adequate to travel by herself.<sup>205</sup> Another beneficiary also mentioned that he attends school but one of the key obstacles he faces is limited access to transportation, especially because he cannot communicate, as he is deaf and mute<sup>206</sup> ABBRAR also reported that mobility is one of the main concerns for PwDs and, as a consequence, they implement programs that address mobility issues by providing bicycles to beneficiaries. However, their reach is limited.<sup>207</sup> A such, it is imperative that more

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200 Shogofa. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

201 Mohammad Sajim Pardiss. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013)

202 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

203 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

204 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

205 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

206 Moheeb Rahman. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

207 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan,

programs that improve the mobility of PwDs are implemented.<sup>208</sup>

#### V. Lack of comprehensive programs that address the needs of PwDs in a comprehensive way.

One of the key complaints expressed by beneficiaries is the fact that most programs do not provide comprehensive support. For example, some organizations provide trainings, but they do not provide equipment for them to perform their trade.<sup>209</sup> Other organizations provide trainings and equipments, but they do not provide seed grants for them to launch their business. In the first example the program addresses the lack of skills of PwDs, but does not address one of the key constraint that PwDs face – limited resources.<sup>210</sup> The latter does not only decrease the impact of donor funded projects, but they also do not achieve the goal which is to empower PwDs and help them become self reliant. Thus, it is critical that programs are designed using a comprehensive approach where the root causes of poverty are addressed.

#### VI. Ineffective Health Care Access

Research findings show that a critical weakness is lack to access to effective healthcare. According to surveys published by UNOPS, in 1999 there were 700,000 PwDs which is equivalent to 3% of the population. Figures published by CPAD estimate that between 4% to 15% percent of the total population are affected by a certain type of disability. From the overall number of PwDs in the country, 94,000 to 200,000 PwDs were disabled due to war related injuries including landmine survivors with amputations, blindness and paralysis.<sup>211</sup>

In addition to war related injuries, a large number of individuals become disabled at birth because they lack of access to effective healthcare. Many PwDs have been disabled due to congenital disabilities, malnutrition during pregnancy, preventable diseases such as polio and tuberculosis, and birth complications in undernourished women. This often lead to cerebral palsy and other type of disabilities.<sup>212</sup> Thus, it is critical that advocacy activities also focus on women's health and access to high quality healthcare to decrease the number of PwDs.

The lack of access to effective healthcare facilities is also mentioned by beneficiaries. Mr. Abdul Sabur mentions that one of the main challenges he faces is lack of healthcare.<sup>213</sup> This translates into limited means to acquire prosthetic devises that can help PwDs cope with the disability. It decreases productivity and increases poverty because the individual is more prone to infectious diseases. In addition to expanding women's health, advocacy efforts should also focus on expanding the network of clinics that are specialized in providing services to PwDs.

#### VII. Discrimination creates barriers for PwDs to access education, employment, and other services.

In addition to limiting the opportunities available for PwDs, discrimination also presents a barrier to become involved in their communities and access basic services. For example, one beneficiary who is blind from one eye, reports that she used to attend school. However, she was the target of bullying because of her disability.

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(13 Jun. 2013).

208 Abdul Baseer. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

209 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

210 Haidi Mohammad. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

211 Jean Francois Trani et al. "Disability in Afghanistan: Taking a Capabilities Approach to look at Research Challenges and Policy Implications ," (<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lc-ccr/lccstaff/jean-francois-trani/HDCAconf0905.pdf>), 05 Jun. 2013.

212 Ibid.

213 Abul Sabur. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).

Because she was constantly harassed and made fun at by her classmates, she decided to quit school.<sup>214</sup> Thus, it is critical that awareness-raising activities target schools, the private sector, and government entities.

### 4.3. Opportunities

#### 4.3.1. Macro-level

I. Significant leverage to empower PwDs by integrating them into the formal educational system through targeted interventions.

Research findings show that there is a significant room for improving PwDs' access to education including women if adequate materials are provided.<sup>215</sup> Examples include braille materials and an Afghan sign language dictionary which ANAD has already produced.<sup>216</sup> Additionally emphasis should be made on training more qualified technicians to assist the visually and hearing impaired. This will facilitate the inclusion of deaf students in higher education.<sup>217</sup> Evidence show that if trainers are present, they can become a significant asset to expand educational opportunities to PwDs as the case of Mr. Moheeb Rahman who is attending 11<sup>th</sup> grade at a hearing impaired school can show.<sup>218</sup>

In addition to providing PwDs with materials for the visually and hearing impaired, opening educational opportunities to develop more specialized skills including English classes, computer classes, and proposal writing will also provide PwDs with valuable skills to become self-sufficient.<sup>219</sup> During the interviews, access to education was identified by PwDs as one of the most important opportunities present in the disability sector at the macro-level. Through policy interventions and by prioritizing funding for the development of braille materials, the training of technicians, and providing access to specialized transportation, a large number of PwDs can be empowered. The latter can be anchored in the current efforts from the part of the MofEd who is currently working on expanding educational opportunities for PwDs.

II. Opportunity to reduce the number of PwDs by focusing on pre-natal care.

The revision of the strategic and operational plan of the Ministry of Public Health is ongoing. It's strategic priorities include: improve the nutritional status of the Afghan population; and increase equitable access to quality health services.<sup>220</sup> Given that a large number of PwDs are disabled at birth due to congenital malformations, the revision process provides a unique opportunity to make pre-natal care and nutrition as one of the ministry's priorities. This will ensure that pregnant women have access to the necessary dietary and care needs required during the pregnancy period reducing the number of PwDs. Thus, it is key that organizations

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214 Zahra. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

215 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

216 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

217 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

218 Moheeb Rahman. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

219 Mohammad Sajim Pardiss. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013)

220 Dr. Musa Zia. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Public Health. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

active in the disability sector organize targeted advocacy efforts to ensure that the MoPH includes the provision of pre-natal care as one of its key priorities. In fact, one of the key indicators to measure the success of the strategy implementation can become a significant reduction in the number of PwDs that are disabled at birth.

### III. Lobby for the continued inclusion and advancement of the rights of PwDs.

As it was discussed in the strengths sections, there are efforts from the part of the government to support the inclusion and advancement of rights of PwDs. For instance, there is the ANDAP law which provides a road map for interventions. Other laws such as the Afghanistan National Compact and the National Capacity Building Program also support PwDs.<sup>221</sup><sup>222</sup> In fact, CSOs and donors have expressed that these laws allow them to prioritize and target their programs according to the priorities of GoIRA.<sup>223</sup> However, for these laws to be effective, there needs to be significant efforts for their implementation. Possible solutions include forming a coalition of CSOs to lobby for the proper implementation of such laws, as well as to form an oversight body for M&E to measure impact.

### IV. Conduct ongoing disability surveys.

There is a significant opportunity to expand the services provided to PwDs if more information becomes available regarding their location, employment status, income levels, types of disability, and levels of education. With this data, programs that target the specific needs of each subgroup within the disability sector can be created and prioritized. This is a point that was raised by the MoWA who expressed that programs to support disabled women could be created if more information became available.<sup>224</sup> MoLSAM has also launched a disability survey to assess the employment of PwDs aiming at creating a program to build bazaars where PwDs can initiate businesses.<sup>225</sup> The need for such data was expressed by the donor community who mentioned that “*a strong survey should be implemented to know the exact number of people with disabilities and what their needs are.*”<sup>226</sup> The survey can be implemented through INGOs and NGOs in different geographical areas and the districts should also be targeted.<sup>227</sup>

### V. Strong coordination between civil society actors (NGOs and DPOs) and government agencies.

Research findings show that there is ample room to increase collaboration between CSOs, DPOs, and government agencies. MoLSAM mentions that there is already a strong coordination between the ministry and CSOs and DPOs.<sup>228</sup> The MoPH expressed that a strong coordination with the disability sector is one of its

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221 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

222 Abdul Baseer. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

223 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

224 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

225 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

226 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

227 Ibid

228 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

strengths.<sup>229</sup> According to AIHCR, it will help the government to share ideas about projects and programs that target the needs of PwDs.<sup>230</sup> It will also support the implementation of policies and monitoring of progress. A strong relationship between the government, CSOs and DPOs can also increase access to areas that currently are off limits for CSOs. Thus, partnerships between the government and organizations should be strengthened.

Current evidence suggest that increasing linkages between organizations active in the disability field and the government can bring significant advantages. The participation of ANAB as a member of the peace process and the presidential election can exemplify this point.<sup>231</sup>

#### VI. Strengthen the mandate and scope of oversight bodies to advance the rights of PwDs

Research shows that there is significant room to strengthen the mandate and scope of the AIHCR to act as an oversight body for the implementation and monitoring of policies that support the inclusion of PwDs. A strong legal framework already exists. However, if the scope and mandate are expanded, the AIHCR can evolve as a national human rights authority. Additionally, if ties between organizations active in the disability field and the AIHCR are nurtured, strong pressure can be applied to ministries to ensure that they follow the constitutional mandates and laws that support PwDs. For example, the employment quota that mandates that all government ministries must hire PwDs for a minimum of 3% of their total labor force is one area where a coalition between the AIHCR, CSOs, and DPOs can collaborate together to ensure it is implemented. It will increase work opportunities for PwDs while advancing the rights granted in the Afghan constitution and the UNCRPD.

#### VII. Support the Expansion of Educational Opportunities for PwDs.

The MofED has the goal to expand the outreach and scope of education in Afghanistan and have plans to include PwDs in their curriculum to break the dependency on CSOs to provide these type of services. According to the MofED, in accordance with the Afghanistan Constitution, and MDGs' goals, the Ministry of Education is committed to ensure that by 2020 all school-aged boys and girls will complete primary grades. The Ministry is currently working with all relevant stakeholders on policies to include PwDs. They also have plans to improve and develop materials for specialized education.<sup>232</sup> A possible model to follow is FWFs high school which has been providing education to the hearing impaired since 2004.<sup>233</sup> Given that the current policy framework and implementation is its nascent state, there is significant room to support the expansion of educational opportunities. This is especially true for female PwDs' education.<sup>234</sup> It includes ensuring that transportation measures are considered in their programs, providing feedback to the ministry based on lessons learned, and, most importantly, providing feedback for the proper design and implementation of the policy, as well as for the creation of a M&E and oversight body with executive powers to enforce the provisions of such policy.

#### VIII. The government has signaled some support for PwDs.

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229 Dr. Musa Zia. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Public Health. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

230 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

231 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

232 Abdul Mateen Jafar. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level – MoED. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

233 Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

234 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)



The government of Afghanistan has signaled that the inclusion and economic empowerment of PwDs is within its priority sectors. Not only they have created a strong legislative framework to advance the rights of PwDs, but they have also distributed land for 550 war disabled PwDs in Chehil Dokhtaran through MoLSAM.<sup>235</sup><sup>236</sup> MoLSAM also distributed 200 apartments to PwDs for free and is working on the creation of the National Institute for Disability in Kabul to help with education and vocational training. They also intent to build bazaars for PwDs to promote PwDs businesses and employment.<sup>237</sup> Similarly, the MoWA opened two shops for female PwDs where the latter can sell their products. They also built ramps at the women's garden so female PwDs can access it and included disabled females in the celebration of the International Day for Women.<sup>238</sup> The Wolisi Jirga also pushed legislation to increase support to PwDs that are supported financially by MoLSAM, and have been working with municipalities to ensure that infrastructure that facilitates the mobility of PwDs is built.<sup>239</sup><sup>240</sup> The National Association for the Hearing Impaired received 10 acres of land from the government to build a school in Deh-e-Khodaidad in Kabul City.<sup>241</sup> Given that the government has provided signals that it is willing to support PwDs, organizations active in the disability sector should collaborate to lobby for the inclusion of other needs including housing, transportation, accessibility issues, and economic empowerment to ensure that the needs of PwDs are addressed in a holistic way instead of the current piece meal approach. The latter has shown to be an ineffective mechanism as current programs often leave gaps that prevent PwDs from becoming self-sufficient.

#### IX. Increase the participation of PwDs in elections as per article 29 of the UNCRDP

Article 29 of the UNCRDP mandates that member states should provide access to PwDs for political participation. This principle is already contained in the Afghan electoral law. However, research findings show that there are many impediments for PwDs to exercise this right. As it was previously mentioned, voting polls are in the district centers while most PwDs live in the districts. Because there are no reliable means of transportation, PwDs cannot transport themselves to the voting centers. Another area where support can be provided is in developing electoral materials in braille language, and promote political messages in both braille and sign language to ensure that the visually and hearing impaired can exercise their right to vote. PwDs expressed during the interviews that they are ready to form part of the community and become involved in both the political and electoral processes.<sup>242</sup> In fact, evidence shows that if provided with information, PwDs will participate in electoral processes.<sup>243</sup> However, structural barriers currently prevent them from doing so. As such, there is ample room of cooperation between CSOs, DPOs, and government entities to facilitate the right to voting for PwDs in the upcoming election.

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235 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

236 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

237 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

238 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

239 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

240 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

241 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

242 Faiz Mohammad. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

243 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

X. Increase PwDs access to information based on Article 21 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities.

The fact that the media in Afghanistan has been a growing sector provides opportunities for outreach and awareness raising if proper mechanisms of engagement are in place. For instance, it was identified in the weaknesses section that lack of awareness about the rights of PwDs and their potential contributions to society, as well as discrimination, are some of the obstacles that prevent them from being included in their communities. Similarly, PwDs have had limited access to information both about services provided by the government and electoral issues. Similarly, most TV shows including the news do not include PwDs within their programming. Given that there are more than one hundred TV and Radio channels operating in Afghanistan, the government can outreach to PwDs in districts through media. It can also facilitate PwDs access to relevant information. It is important to mention that the Wolisi Jirga has already been in contact with the Ministry of Information and Culture to air programs for the hearing impaired.<sup>244</sup> Thus, it is key that a strategy to engage media in disability related issues is enacted. This can be through the legislative process by creating an alliance between CSOs and the Wolisi Jirga, or direct engagement through coordination meetings. Media should include sign language whenever possible.

XI. Opportunity to increase employment for PwDs if the 3% quota is properly implemented by government ministries.

There is ample opportunity to increase employment opportunities for PwDs if the 3% quota is properly implemented by the government. According to MoLSAM, there are 717 of PwDs that work in the line ministries, and 897 that work at LNGO and INGOs.<sup>245</sup> The AIHRC is one of the few government entities that have implemented the law,<sup>246</sup> and the MoPH expressed that it offers significant job placement opportunities for PwDs.<sup>247</sup> The MoWA mentioned that they do not have any PwD working at the ministry but they do employ one at the women's garden. They mentioned that one of the key factors behind not employing female PwDs was the lack of referrals.<sup>248</sup> Therefore, there is significant room for the expansion of PwD employment within the government sector if more coordination between agencies is sought. Thus, it is key that coordinated efforts to lobby for the execution of the policy, as well as for its monitoring, are implemented. It is important to mention that MoLSAM is working on legislation to increase the quota from 3% to 7% which will expand employment opportunities for PwDs even further.<sup>249</sup>

In addition to lobbying for the implementation of the policy, there is a significant room of opportunity to create linkages between government and CSOs' job placement programs. In such way, CSOs can develop the capacity of PwDs according to the skills required by the government. This will guarantee that CSOs train PwDs in marketable skills, and the government ensures that it fulfills its legal mandates and priorities.

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244 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

245 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

246 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

247 Dr. Musa Zia. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Public Health. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

248 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

249 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

## XII. Opportunity to expand self-employment in the districts.

Given that 80% of PwDs live in rural areas, to pursue a strategy for employment via the government only is unsustainable. Therefore, it is required that PwDs are also encouraged to seek self-employment as an alternative. Currently, there are programs that support SMEs including those initiated by PwDs. This includes ABADE which is being implemented by USAID and the AREDP program implemented by MRRD.<sup>250</sup> The former provides technical support through in-kind grants to promote employment, while the later is focused on capacity building, TVET, and facilitating access to markets. Given that one complain expressed by several PwDs is the lack of access to capital and financing, increasing linkages with the government and donors can become viable mechanisms for promoting employment opportunities especially at the district level.

### 4.3.2. Meso-level

#### I. Promote Employment through innovation.

Most organizations active in the field of disability that implement CBR programs provide job-placement for beneficiaries. However, linkages with organizations outside of the disability sector are limited which undermines the success of the programs. However, AABRAR has shown that through innovation, job-placement programs can increase their effectiveness. AABRAR has recently introduced a job search and business training component to all of its vocational training courses. The job search component uses databases where employment opportunities are aggregated.<sup>251</sup> The latter facilitates the search for employment for PwDs while maximizing their potential to attain a job. Following AABRAR's lead, CSOs and DPOs can promote employment generation through innovation. This includes creating a national resume database for PwDs where all organizations and government agencies can look for candidates directly.<sup>252</sup>

#### II. Programs to support the capacity development of CSOs.

As it was mentioned in the strengths section, the support that Tawanmandi provides for capacity building and organizational development provides local NGOs with a unique opportunity to advance the rights of PwDs. Thus, it is important that similar programs are implemented specifically targeting the disability sector. The benefits will not only be ripped by those organizations who are being supported, but also their co-partners. This is especially true in regards to funding and technical issues. The fact that during the Tawanmandi call for proposals a limited number of NGOs applied,<sup>253</sup> it suggests that there is an imperative need to build the capacity of NGOs so they can take advantage of opportunities present in the disability sector. Similarly, other areas where intervention is needed are multi-agency coordination to jump-start the federation, and advocacy strategies to advance issues related to the disability sector at the national level among others.

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250 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 24.

251 Abdul Baseer. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

252 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)

253 Arasta Harshoon. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interviews – Tawanmandi. Kabul, Afghanistan, (30 Jun. 2013)

### III. Empower PwDs through Community Based Rehabilitation Programs.

There is an ample opportunity for CSOs working in the disability sector to continue empowering PwDs through CBR programs, vocational training, inclusive education, and education for children with intellectual disabilities.<sup>254</sup> For example, AABRAR currently runs vocational trainings for 70 women with disabilities to learn a trade, and they will provide support for them to start a business.<sup>255</sup> The opportunity to continue empowering PwDs through CBR programs is especially present in the districts where 80% of PwDs live. Thus, CSOs should engage with local authorities and community elders to expand their services in the districts where possible.

### IV. Empower PwDs through targeted advocacy programs.

There are significant opportunities to advance the rights of PwDs through targeted advocacy programs. This includes advocacy activities to increase employment opportunities for PwDs especially in regards to the implementation of the 3% quota in collaboration with the AIHRC. Similarly, there are advocacy opportunities for the creation of the Federation of DPOs. A third area for advocacy includes the creation of government programs that build the capacity of DPOs and CSOs and provide them with financial and technical assistance. Another area where advocacy efforts are needed include lobbying donors to prioritize funding for projects that target infrastructure development in government buildings and other facilities. Other advocacy activities also include lobbying MRRD to ensure that accessibility requirements for PwDs are included in NSP financed infrastructure projects. There is ample room for collaboration between research focused NGOs to assess the labor market and social access for PwDs, and, therefore, increase both employment and social inclusion opportunities.<sup>256</sup>

### V. Network with organizations active outside of the disability sector to increase employment opportunities.

As it was mentioned in the weaknesses section, linkages between organizations active in the disability sector and those outside of it are weak. This undermines potential opportunities for knowledge transfer, as well as for PwDs to develop their skills in trades that are more in line with the market. Similarly, the impact of job-placement programs are weakened due to the fact that the largest employers of PwDs are organizations active within the disability sector. Thus, it is key that CSOs and DPOs increase their linkages with other organizations. In fact, Mr. Abdul Khalil's case can illustrate that this strategy can be successful. The latter started as a mailman working for ORMDA. When word spread out about his services, he was hired by other organizations and some foreign embassies.<sup>257</sup> Networking with other organizations outside of the disability sector can be done through awareness-raising activities, conferences, and working groups.

### VI. Increase resources provided to PwDs post-graduation from TVET programs.

The success of vocational programs at promoting self-employment among PwDs is a potential driver to widen employment opportunities. For example, a beneficiary who graduated from a tailoring program was provided support by her family to start a shop. After a couple of years in operation, she now has six PwDs employed at her

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254 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

255 Abdul Baseer. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

256 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 13 – 16.

257 Abdul Khalil. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).

tailoring shop. She now has sustainable income and a stable working environment. In fact, she mentions, “*there are opportunities for PwDs to become employed. All PwDs have a skill and they can work in technical workshops if provided the opportunity.*”<sup>258</sup> Thus, as it can be seen, there are significant possibilities to widen PwDs' employment prospects.

Research findings show that for vocational trainings to be effective at promoting self-employment, resources to start businesses must be provided. Providing tools is necessary. However, seed grants are also needed for PwDs to invest in their shops. All trainees who received financial support from their family members were able to pursue self-employment and succeeded. Those that did not have support, did not.<sup>259</sup> Thus, it is critical that seed grants are provided as part of a comprehensive package for PwDs' vocational training programs. This strategy will maximize the number of PwDs that can pursue self-employment, and can also serve as a driver for PwDs employment. As it was mentioned in the weaknesses section, the largest employers of PwDs within the private sector are organizations that are run by PwDs.

#### VII. Room for expansion of successful programs if funding mechanisms become available.

A key constraint that is currently being experienced by organizations is limited funding for programs. In fact, Handicap International mentioned that they can expand their physical rehabilitation centers, increase the number of social support workers in their current locations, and implement programs in Herat if funding is available.<sup>260</sup> Given the fact that current programs are primarily focused on serving the needs of PwDs in urban centers, there is significant room for expansion if funding mechanisms become available. This will widen the reach of organizations to penetrate the districts where services for PwDs are nonexistent.

Increased availability of funding will not only impact the services delivered in rural areas, but in urban ones too. There is a large number of PwDs in Afghanistan and their numbers are increasing due to war injuries. Thus, there is the need to expand services to ensure that the system can cope with the growing population of PwDs. The latter present a significant opportunity for CSOs and advocacy activities should be planned to raise this issue with donors and government officials.

#### VIII. Increase collaboration between local CSOs, as well as CSOs and INGOs to improve service delivery and capacity building.

There are significant opportunities for collaboration between local CSOs and INGOs. Partnerships with INGOs can increase the capacity of local CSOs in capacity building, program design, funding, expertise, revision of vocational training curriculum, employment for PwDs, and for creating coalitions for advocacy purposes.<sup>261</sup> In fact, CCD was founded as a HI project. Through the partnership, HI built CCD's capacity and the latter now is an independent and leading organization within the disability sector.<sup>262</sup> Other potential room for collaboration include innovations in service delivery and increased geographical outreach by the organizations.

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258 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

259 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 40 - 47.

260 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

261 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 15 – 16.

262 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 15 – 16.

Similar to the partnerships between local CSOs and INGOs, there is significant room for collaboration between local CSOs including NGOs and DPOs. The latter is especially true in regards to capacity building activities for beneficiaries,<sup>263</sup> advocacy activities, implementation of community education programs, implementation of awareness raising activities, improvements in service delivery, and increasing the geographical coverage of organizations to capture funding in under served areas.<sup>264,265</sup> Research findings show that by collaborating together, organizations can create synergy and increase the impact of their projects.

IX. Potential for increased outreach with MRRD, MoEC, NGOs, and local NGOs active outside of the disability sector.

In addition to having the potential to collaborate with INGOs and local CSOs, there is ample room of opportunity for increased cooperation and outreach with government ministries including MRRD, MoEC, MMD, MoPH, MoHE, and MoEd.<sup>266</sup> This is especially true in regards to policy making and implementation to ensure that the provisions set forth in the Afghanistan Compact, the ACBP, and the ANAPD. Areas where support may be needed include M&E of policy implementation, budgeting, program oversight, and promoting dialogue between government officials and members of civil society to ensure that policies accomplish the goals set forth in the MDGs.

#### X. Increased Transparency

As it will be discussed in the threats section, corruption is one of the major challenges that the disability sector faces. Thus, it is critical that new measures for oversight and transparency are devised.<sup>267</sup> This will translate into having more accountable organizations, as well as significant improvements in the service delivery for PwDs. It will also have a positive impact in the internal operations of organizations as a culture of responsibility and accountability will be developed. Another area where positive impacts can be experienced is in employee satisfaction as new resources for salaries and other benefits will become available for employees. Thus, it is key that an oversight body is created to ensure transparency and accountability, strengthen anti-corruption laws, create channels for denouncing corrupt practices, and increase linkages with the security services to ensure prosecution.

#### 4.3.3. Micro-Level

I. Ongoing efforts to supply PwDs with materials to improve access to education and mobility.

There are ongoing efforts to supply PwDs with materials to improve access to education and mobility. Currently, SERVE is printing braille books for people with visual impairments,<sup>268</sup> and AARBAR is providing bicycles to

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263 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)

264 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 16.

265 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)

266 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 38.

267 Abul Sabur. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).

268 Mujtaba Rasuli. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – SERVE organization. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013).

beneficiaries who graduate from the program.<sup>269</sup> These kind of efforts address some of the key constraints that most PwDs face including access to education and lack of reliable means for transportation. Thus, it is critical that vocational training courses, CBR programs, and other activities geared towards PwDs address issues of mobility in a sustainable way to maximize impact. It is important to mention that the Wolisi Jirga is also working on mobility issues as they have already raised the issue of building infrastructure that increases the mobility of PwDs with cities and municipalities.<sup>270</sup>

## II. PwDs are highly motivated to participate in electoral processes.

There is evidence that shows that PwDs are highly motivated to participate in electoral processes. PwDs expressed during the interviews that they are ready to form part of the community and become involved in both the political and electoral processes.<sup>271</sup> In fact, evidence shows that if provided with information, PwDs will participate in elections.<sup>272</sup> For example, a female beneficiary points that she wasn't able to vote during the parliamentary elections because she did not know anything about the candidates as she lacked information about them. However, she did exercise her right to vote during the presidential election and expects to participate in the upcoming one voting for someone who will pay special attention to issues related to PwDs.<sup>273</sup> Another beneficiary from AARBAR also mentioned that now that she reached the legal age for voting, she is prepared to participate in the upcoming presidential election.<sup>274</sup> Because of the growing number of PwDs due to war related injuries, PwDs can become an important voting block in the near future increasing their political leverage. Thus, it is critical to create programs that support the political engagement of PwDs.

## III. Opportunities to increase interactions and social capital for PwDs if a nurturing environment is provided.

Evidence shows that there are significant opportunities to increase the interactions between PwDs and their social capital if a nurturing environment is provided. For example, many PwDs expressed that prior to becoming involved with CSOs active in the disability sector, they experienced significant discrimination from peers. However, once they were enrolled in programs for PwDs, the level of interaction with other PwDs increased. This translated into a larger social support network, creating new friends, new opportunities for leisure activities, and an increased self-esteem.<sup>275</sup><sup>276</sup> Given that PwDs experience severe obstacles including a weak safety net, a wider social network between PwDs can become an coping mechanisms to overcome some of the challenges faced. Thus, it is important that further opportunities for the interaction between PwDs are provided.

## IV. Increased living standards for PwDs if employment opportunities are available.

There is overwhelming evidence pointing at the fact that access to meaningful employment opportunities can

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269 Dr. Abdul Basir. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AABRAR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

270 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

271 Faiz Mohammad. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

272 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

273 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

274 Shogofa. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

275 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

276 Moheeb Rahman. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

increase the living standards of PwDs' and their families. For instance, miss Farzana reports a significant increase in her living standard after she launched her business.<sup>277</sup> It is a similar situation with Shofoga and Razia who report significant economic benefits from their employment at AABRAR.<sup>278279</sup> Mr. Abdul Khalil and Mr. Abdul Sabur also report that after attaining meaningful employment, they were finally able to pay for their family expenses.<sup>280281</sup> Thus, it is critical that new employment schemes are devised to promote PwD employment, as well as to involve PwDs in the lobbying efforts for the implementation of the 3% government employment quota.

#### V. Increased advocacy opportunities and political leverage for PwDs

The spokesperson for the Wolisi Jirga mentions that one of the key opportunities for the disability sector is the high degree of participation from the part of PwDs at the grassroots level.<sup>282</sup> Evidence of this is present in the large number of organizations founded by PwDs to serve PwDs, the fact that PwDs are the largest employers of PwDs, and the large number of unions and associations that PwDs have created to advance their rights. This political activism if properly coordinated can increase advocacy efforts and the political leverage of PwDs. This is especially true if we bring into consideration the fact that the number of PwDs is increasing, and that they have a strong motivation to become involved in the political process. Thus, it is key that advocacy efforts are coordinated between grassroots organizations and the ACPD to maximize impact,<sup>283284</sup> and that political activism is nurtured at the grassroots level to increase the PwDs' political leverage.

### 4.4. Threats

#### 4.4.1. Macro-Level

##### I. Weak enforcement mechanisms to enforce the current laws that support PwDs.

Research findings show that one of the largest threats to the advancement of PwDs is a weak enforcement mechanism within government institutions. Despite the fact that there is a very strong policy framework to advance the rights of PwDs, impact of policies and programs will be undermined if no enforcement is present at the ministerial level. This issue was raised by multiple stakeholders. Tawanmandi mentioned that there should be mechanisms for CSOs to be able to participate in policy making but there should be a mechanisms to enforce the implementation of such policies.<sup>285</sup> Similarly, the AICHR said that a weak rule of law and lack of

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277 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

278 Razia. Seeta Habibi. Interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

279 Shogofa. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

280 Abdul Khalil. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).

281 Abul Sabur. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).

282 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

283 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23 Aug. 2013)

284 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)

285 Arasta Harshoon. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interviews – Tawanmandi. Kabul,



implementation of justice negatively affect its activities and PwDs.<sup>286</sup>

The fact that there is a strong policy framework to support PwDs is an asset. However, if no implementation and enforcement mechanisms are in place, it can threaten their inclusion and empowerment. On one hand, the government lacks capacity to implement. On the other hand, there is no supervisory body to ensure that ministries are executing the mandates of the laws. The implementation of the 3% quota is the best example at hand.

In order to ensure that laws are implemented, it is necessary to create an oversight body with the authority to enforce laws and oversight powers. This body must be composed by independent institutions including CSO representatives of organizations active in the disability sector and outside of it. A possible model to follow to push inter-ministerial cooperation is the Disability Stakeholder Coordination Group (DSCG).

## II. Corruption

Corruption is the largest threat that the disability sector faces.<sup>287288289</sup> On one hand, larger amounts of money are being funneled through the government to implement projects. On the other hand, the government lacks capacity to spend and evidence shows that government officials ask for bribes to award projects. In fact, several stakeholders mentioned that government officials usually demand money to allow the implementation of activities. Similarly, community leaders also demand money to support the implementation of projects.<sup>290291</sup> The most concerning issue is that local NGOs are known to pay for projects to be awarded.<sup>292</sup>

Corruption undermines the impact of policies that support PwDs and their implementation. They also affect programs implemented to support PwDs as the total funding spent on services is reduced due to bribes, and it can also compromise the quality of services delivered to PwDs.

In order to deal with corruption, a coordinating body such as the DSCG should make the cases public as soon as it is learned that an individual, organization, or government official engaged in such practice. Relationships with law enforcement agencies such as the courts, attorney general, and the Afghan security forces must be strengthened to ensure that corruption cases lead to prosecution.

## III. Increasing number of PwDs due to war related injuries.

The third largest threat to the disability sector is the increasing number of people who become disabled due to war related injuries.<sup>293</sup> AAR Japan mentioned that Afghanistan is one of the most mine-affected countries in the

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Afghanistan, (30 Jun. 2013)

286 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

287 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

288 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

289 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

290 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

291 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

292 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

293 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23

world. Accidents related to landmines and unexploded ordinance (UXO) remain common and with inadequate medical services, the number of PwDs will increase due to body injury and disease. In fact, the weapon of choice used by the Taliban include hidden mines which is a continuous threat to civilians.<sup>294</sup> One of the beneficiaries who was interviewed for this paper was injured during landmine accident where she lost her two legs when she was three years old.<sup>295</sup> According to IRIN News, there were at least “481 landmine and ERW casualties (108 deaths and 373 injuries)”<sup>296</sup> in 2008. Similarly, according to Tom Vanden, there was a 9% increase in the number of mines detonated from 2010 to 2011 and hidden mines were responsible for 60% of all civilian casualties which totaled more than 4,000 killed or wounded in 2011.<sup>297</sup>

Given that the number of PwDs is increasing while funding is decreasing, and the fact that the government does not have the capacity to implement policies and programs for the support of PwDs, the rising number of PwDs is one of the largest threats currently experienced by the disability sector. The system runs the risk of becoming overwhelmed and because many accidents occur in the districts which many are out of reach of CSOs, it is highly likely that the services provided will be insufficient for years to come.

Thus, it is necessary to increase the outreach of mine awareness programs through TV and other mass media to include individuals living in the districts. It is also necessary that funding is increased for demining programs to reduce the number of casualties. Advocacy programs can be conducted by CSOs to reach out to AOGs with a petition requesting a reduction in the number of mines used.

#### IV. Security

Security is the largest threat as expressed by agencies at all levels. At the macro-level, the security situation prevents government agencies from expanding their services to the districts despite the fact that the majority of PwDs live in rural areas.<sup>298</sup> This includes access to education and health.<sup>299</sup> Thus, it is key that a closer coordination with the security forces is sought to mitigate the current risks associated with delivering services to PwDs in rural areas.

#### V. Budget

Decreasing budgets is a large threat for the disability sector.<sup>300301</sup> This comes from the facts that the international

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Aug. 2013)

294 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

295 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

296 Irin News. "AFGHANISTAN: Landmine deaths, injuries torment villagers ," Humanitarian News & Analysis (<http://www.irinnews.org/report/87902/afghanistan-landmine-deaths-injuries-torment-villagers>; 28 Jan. 2010), 05 Aug. 2013.

297 Tom Vanden Brook, “IED attacks in Afghanistan set record” *USA Today* (<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/story/2012-01-25/IEDs-afghanistan/52795302/1>; 26 Jan. 2012), 05 Aug. 2013.

298 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

299 Dr. Musa Zia. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Public Health. Kabul, Afghanistan, (12 Jun. 2013).

300 Ibid

301 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23 Aug. 2013)

community is scaling back its efforts in Afghanistan, the Afghan government is unable to increase the levels of taxation, and that organizations and beneficiaries suffer from donor dependency for their existence. Decreasing funding presents a significant threat in several areas. Within the health sector, it is expected that a large number of people will become disabled because of war related injuries and care is often not provided in a timely manner. Reduced funding will also have an impact in the services provided to pregnant women increasing the possibility of having more people disabled due to congenital malformations. Thus, it is critical that the disability sector coordinates and launches a strong advocacy campaign to ensure that funding is provided by the Ministry of Finance during the appropriation process - funding should be prioritized for health and education as these are two of the primary needs of PwDs – and that policies to support the development of a market based funding scheme for CSOs is developed.

#### 4.4.2. Meso Level

##### I. Decreasing funding and more reliance on the government to award grants.

Decreasing funding is the third largest threat identified by all relevant stakeholders. For instance, decreasing funding is already threatening the implementation of programs.<sup>302</sup> For example, HI mentioned that for many years the European Community (EC) has been providing funding for their activities in Kandahar. However, changes in the current funding structures will force HI to rely on USAID because the EC decreased funding for the south and is currently channeling it through the government.<sup>303</sup> ANAD also pointed out that teachers working at the school for the hearing impaired run by the organization had to volunteer their services for three months given the lack of funding to pay their salaries. They also said that if no financial support is received, they will have to stop activities within four months of the date of this report<sup>304</sup> This actions may threaten the long-term sustainability of the program negatively impacting the services provided to PwDs.<sup>305306</sup>

ALSO also mentioned that one the largest threats they experience is the reduction of funding. In fact, they mentioned they may need to close their offices after 2014 if funding from international donors decreases and the residuals are channeled through the government. They refuse to pay for the awarding and implementation of projects which threatens the long-term sustainability of their organization.<sup>307</sup> The latter is validated by the recent experience of CCD who experienced a financial crisis due to the reduction of funding in 2012<sup>308</sup>. If the current trends continue more organizations will be threatened.

The findings from the desk research also point out at the possibility of having to reduce awareness-raising activities in communities which may scale back the efforts to end discrimination against PwDs.<sup>309</sup> It is important

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302 Focus Group No. II. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan (17 Aug. 2013)

303 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

304 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

305 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

306 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23 Aug. 2013)

307 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

308 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD’s Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 54 - 55.

309 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD’s Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.”

to remember that the latter is one of the main weaknesses that prevent PwDs from engaging with communities. Similarly, funding reductions threaten the viability of livelihoods programs, access to health care, education, mobility, and all other programs that cater to the needs of PwDs.

In addition to decreasing funding, the fact that most of the aid will be channeled through the government will also have a negative impact in the disability sector. ALSO mentions that the government does not have capacity for M&E and the awarding process will become more corrupt.<sup>310</sup> A similar concern was echoed by HI who mentions that the government does not have capacity.<sup>311</sup> For example, despite the fact that the Ministry of Public Health is the one whose mandated with the implementation of physical rehabilitation programs, they do not have the capacity to implement. Proof of this is the fact that at the moment the MoPH is tasked with training technical workers for the disability sector and they have failed to do so.<sup>312</sup>

In order to cope with this threat, it is important that organizations active in the disability sector lobby the government, especially the Ministry of Finance, to ensure that budget appropriations remain at the current levels of funding. It is also critical that CSOs develop new market based mechanisms to obtain funding to break from their donor dependency.

## II. Insecurity

Insecurity is the second largest threat experienced by organizations.<sup>313</sup> It is important to mention that this threat affect both the macro and the meso level. For example, AAR Japan mentioned that insecurity affect their activities as neither them, nor organizations can access districts to serve the needs of PwDs.<sup>314</sup> AABRAR mentions that insecurity in most rural areas is a threat for them and impact their activities as they cannot send their staff to work in those areas despite the fact that the largest number of PwDs reside in the country side.<sup>315</sup> ALSO had to stopped activities in the districts as their security officer did not allow local staff to travel due to the high risk that it entailed.<sup>316</sup> ANAD pointed out that due to security considerations, they have had to stop several activities.<sup>317</sup> FWF said that as the result of several blasts, several students have been injured including 2 children who were killed in Paghman province.<sup>318</sup>

But insecurity is also not limited to military activity. For example, ANAB had requested to receive government land from the government to build a permanent office during a land distribution in Chehil Dokhtaran. They were commissioned to become part of the land distribution committee but their staff were beaten and threatened by

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(Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 15.

310 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

311 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

312 Ibid.

313 Mohammed Ali Mohabati. Niaz Wali Sahak, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso-level interview – AICHR. Kabul, Afghanistan, (10 Jun. 2013)

314 Yama Hakimi. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – AAR Japan. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

315 Abdul Baseer. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (09 Jun. 2013)

316 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

317 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

318 Siyawash Payab. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview – FWF. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013).

beneficiaries. Thus, they had to leave the area and relinquish their right to the land that had been offered.<sup>319</sup> Thus, insecurity for NGOs working in the disability sector can come from different fronts, not only combatants.

In order to cope with security, it is important to lobby with donors for a sensitization campaign through mass media. CSOs active in the disability sector can advocate for increased funding for awareness-raising activities. These can be broadcast via radio and television to show the benefits that their programs can bring to PwDs living in insecure districts. Similarly, advocacy efforts with community elders and local shuras can be carried out to raise their awareness about programs that support PwDs, and ask them for guarantees regarding the security of their staff if they come to offer their services in insecure areas.

### III. Changes in the regulatory framework can threaten the activities of CSOs

Changes in the regulatory framework can pose a direct threat to CSOs working in the disability sector. In fact, this is the main threat identified by the spokesperson of the Wolisi Jirga who mentions that, even though, the jirga enacts laws to advance the rights of PwDs, legislation can be vetoed by the president for political interests.<sup>320</sup> ANAD has also developed resolutions to further support the inclusion of the hearing impaired under the CRPD but the government refused to consider it.<sup>321</sup> In 2011, new reporting requirements from the part of the Ministry of Economy, and limited outreach to CSOs to inform them of the changes, translated into having a large number of organizations closed.<sup>322</sup> These changes can have significant impact on CSOs as they may threaten the implementation of activities, the existence of the organization, reporting mechanisms, funding streams, and taxation.

Similarly, changes in the policy framework such as the time when the ANAPD law expired and wasn't renewed, can also have significant impacts on the organizations.<sup>323</sup> For instance, the Action Plan provided both donors and organizations with a road map regarding the priorities that GoIRA set forth for the disability sector in line with the Afghanistan Compact and the MDGs. This document was used by both donors, but primarily CSOs, to design their programs based on their priorities. However, after the law expired, organizations did not have a road map to follow. Furthermore, there was no legal nor programmatic certainty for CSOs as it wasn't clear whether the priorities at the policy level were going to change, or whether the disability sector was going to go through a process of restructuring.

In order to cope with sudden changes in the regulatory framework, it is important that CSOs become more involved in policy making decisions. As it was previously mentioned, it is necessary that an oversight body that ensures that policies are implemented and that engages in policy making with the government is created. At the moment, the DSCG can carry out that role. Additionally, CSOs should form coalitions including, but not limited to, the federation of DPOs for lobbying and advocacy to influence the legislative process.

### IV. Changes within market trends can threaten the long-term sustainability of economic empowerment programs.

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319 Mohammad Ehsan Fayaz. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT Analysis of the Disability Sector meso-level - ANAB. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013). Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013)

320 Saied Nadershah Bahr, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Parliament. Kabul, Afghanistan, (17 Jun. 2013).

321 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

322 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 13.

323 Humayun. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT Analysis meso level interview – Handicap International. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013)

Most economic empowerment programs rely on the assumption that the skills provided to PwDs will be marketable in years to come. This is true for vocational training, basic education, and job-placement programs. However, changes in technology can render obsolete the skills of PwDs within a short time frame. For example, in a market analysis carried out to evaluate the sustainability of CCD's economic empowerment programs, findings show that the sustainability of mobile repair training is being threatened by competition of Chinese made mobiles and the proliferation of smart phones. Similarly, the sustainability of the computer repair training is threatened by new technological developments and the fact that it does not train beneficiaries in software. The sustainability of tailoring training is threatened by lack of refresher trainings to learn new styles and competition from ready made clothes coming from China. The sustainability of CCD's vocational trainings that focus on manufacturing such as carpet weaving are not sustainable due to high production costs and competition from imported goods.<sup>324</sup> In fact, beneficiaries expressed that not being able to sell the products manufactured by PwDs with the support of CSOs is one of the largest financial threats they face.<sup>325</sup>

In addition to external threats, changes in the tastes and preferences of the local community can threaten the long-term sustainability of PwDs businesses.<sup>326</sup> Changes include new clothing styles among others. Thus, it is key that CSOs active in the disability sector conduct market research and adjust the curriculum of their vocational training and basic education programs according to changes in the labor market and changes in consumer preferences to be able to cope with this continued threat.

#### 4.4.3. Micro-Level

##### I. Threat of economic deprivation due to lack of employment opportunities and high unemployment.

Even if PwDs are empowered by participating in CBR, economic empowerment, education, and job-placement programs, they still faced the threat of economic deprivation due to lack of employment opportunities combined with high unemployment. For example, SERVE mentions that the possibility of not finding a job is a threat for PwDs who have graduated from higher education. Similarly, the MoWA mentions that one of the largest problems faced by female PwDs is access to job opportunities.<sup>327</sup> The fact that unemployment is on the rise due to the reduction in funding will have a significant impact on businesses, employment, and earnings of PwDs. Furthermore, the fact that discrimination exists, and that in general terms PwDs have lower levels of education when compared to the rest of the population, will make the situation even more challenging.

Thus, it is key that CSOs advocate for the implementation of the 3% law to open job opportunities for PwDs within the government sector. It is also imperative that PwDs are linked with programs such as ABADE and AREDP to improve the business prospects of those who are already running a business. Similarly, access to finance and the provision of seed grants for PwDs who just graduated is imperative. Other programs such as apprenticeships at factories, offices, and government entities can also increase the skills that PwDs have making

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324 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 29 – 33.

325 Focus Group I. Samiullah Sohail, interviewer. SWOT Analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (23 Aug. 2013)

326 Hector J. Vivero, "CCD's Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report." (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 20.

327 Hussain Ali Muheen, Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – Ministry of Women Affairs. Kabul, Afghanistan, (18 Jun. 2013)

them more marketable.<sup>328</sup> The largest threat that PwDs experience at the moment comes from the economic side.

## II. Discrimination can lead to PwDs depression and to take extreme actions

In addition to preventing PwDs from being included in the community, discrimination is also a threat that if not dealt appropriately can lead to extreme actions from the part of PwDs. In fact, MoLSAM mentioned that the largest threat faced by PwDs, especially women, is discrimination from the part of their families and communities. For example, some family members often prevent PwDs from leaving their home because of fear of public gossip.<sup>329</sup> A beneficiary mentioned that she only wants to be respected. There's been instances where she is teased for not having legs and have often been insulted at social events.<sup>330</sup> In another case, a beneficiary mentioned that she was pursuing education. However, due to the constant harassment from her classmates, she had to abandon schools.<sup>331</sup> In a more extreme situation, a male beneficiary mentioned that after being disabled and facing discrimination from the community and employers, he decided to kill himself. He did not succeed in the attempt, but committing suicide was definitely being considered.<sup>332</sup> Thus, it is important that these issues are dealt with as the local community can perpetuate the negative cultural attitudes and discrimination against PwDs.<sup>333</sup>

In order to prevent this incidents from happening, it is critical that organizations advocate to increase awareness-raising activities that aim at removing the stigma against PwDs. It is also important to mention that advocacy activities should include a sign language component for those families who have hearing impaired PwDs as it was identified that lack of communication is also a challenge within families.<sup>334</sup> This can be done by mass media and must be included in the general policy framework that support PwDs. Other advocacy actions that can be taken is to pressure donors and GoIRA to include psychological support for PwDs to deal with mental disabilities which at the moment they have been relegated. Similarly, a hotline for PwDs to call in moments of crisis should be instituted.

## III. Lack of infrastructure to accommodate to the needs of PwDs can result in life threatening situations

A hidden threat that has been largely ignored is the fact that the lack of infrastructure that caters to the needs of PwDs can result in life threatening situations due to accidents. A beneficiary mentioned that the largest threat for the visually impaired includes falling into holes, being run over by a car, and even falling within their own home and school.<sup>335</sup> Some of these accidents can translate into life threatening situations. Thus, it is critical that advocacy activities focus on the development of infrastructure that is accessible for PwDs to minimize the risk of accidents.

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328 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

329 Asadullah Kamawee & Humayun Sohak. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis macro-level interview – MoLSAM. Kabul, Afghanistan, (02 Jul. 2013)

330 Farzana Alizadah. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

331 Zahra. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

332 Mohammad Sajim Pardiss. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013)

333 Hector J. Vivero, “CCD’s Economic Empowerment Activities and Livelihoods Program Assessment Report.” (Consultancy Report, Handicap International Afghanistan & European Commission, 2012), 20.

334 Nangyalay, Karimullah, & Nazir Ahmad. Ghulamsakhi Qarizada, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level interview - ANAD. Kabul, Afghanistan, (15 Jun. 2013)

335 Mohammad Sajim Pardiss. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (11 Jun. 2013)

#### IV. Weak safety net to protect PwDs

One the largest threats that PwDs face is the lack of a safety net. At the moment PwDs primarily rely on family members as as safety net. However, as mentioned by a beneficiary, the death of a parent or a close relative can translate into homelessness, as well as economic and financial turmoil. Although the government is currently unable to provide a safety net, advocacy activities should focus on ensuring that the government includes the provision of shelter as one of its top priorities along with economic support for those who have lost family members. The same advocacy efforts should also target donors so CSOs can provide shelters and a safety net in the short-run.

#### V. Insecurity can also pose a risk for PwDs long-term financial security

A threat that can impact the overall well being of PwDs is security. If the situation deteriorates after the withdrawal of foreign troops, economic decline will follow. This will threaten the long-term sustainability of PwDs' businesses and their employment opportunities. It will also reduce access to districts and it is likely that the number of PwDs will increase.<sup>336</sup> In order to mitigate the threat, it is important that emergency response plans are included in the policies that support PwDs in Afghanistan to ensure a proper and timely response.

#### VI. Limited choices for PwDs can translate into forcing PwDs into social arrangements that ago against their will and may be harmful for the integrity of the individual.

A highly concerning finding is the fact that due to the social discrimination and limited choices, PwDs can be forced into social arrangements against their will that may be harmful to their personal safety. A beneficiary reports that her brothers engaged her with an older man who killed his first wife. Even though, she is against the marriage and fears for her personal integrity, the family offered her to the person because they perceive that no other individual would marry the beneficiary due to her disability.<sup>337</sup> Thus, it is important that legal mechanisms are created to prevent PwDs from being forced into social arrangements that may threaten their physical integrity. It is also critical that women shelters specialized in female PwDs are created to protect vulnerable women.

#### VII. Corruption

Corruption is a threat that is faced both at the macro level and the micro-level. Within the latter anecdotal evidence points at the fact that many organizations engage in corrupt practices including falsifying financial documents to siphon out funding from budgets, not spending enough in programs, etc. This issue was expressed by both CSO leaders and beneficiaries.<sup>338339</sup> In fact, Mr. Abdul Sabur mentions that he was working for a CSO in the disability sector and he was receiving \$30 usd in salary a month. He was interviewed once by a donor for M&E purposes and the donor revealed that the organization was billing his salary for 200 euros a month. The difference was pocketed by the leadership of the organization.<sup>340</sup> This translates into decreased earnings for the beneficiary and a more unstable financial situation.

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336 Haidi Mohammad. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (05 Jun. 2013).

337 Zahra. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (13 Jun. 2013).

338 Suleiman. Hector J. Vivero, interviewer. SWOT analysis meso-level – ALSO. Kabul, Afghanistan, (04 Jun. 2013).

339 Abdul Khalil. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).

340 Abul Sabur. Seeta Habibi, interviewer. SWOT analysis micro-level interview. Kabul, Afghanistan, (19 Jun. 2013).



In addition to impacting beneficiaries in their daily lives, corruption has a large impact in the implementation of projects and the quality of activities. As more funds are diverted from the intended purposes, PwDs will receive fewer benefits from the funding made available by donors. Thus, it is critical that better linkages with the security sector and a direct channel between citizens and donors where the former can denounce organizations that engage in these practices are established to prevent corruption.

## V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Persons with Disabilities are amongst the most vulnerable groups in Afghanistan. As a consequence they have been considered as a priority area by the government. In fact, there are several policy frameworks that aim at empowering PwDs. These include the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment, the National Action Plan for People with Disabilities, among others. These policies are anchored by a set of international treaties such as the United Nations Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities, and are being implemented by several ministries including the MoLSAMD through the Deputy for Martyrs and Disabled Affairs, the Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Great progress has been made over the last couple of years. These include advancing a solid policy framework to support the empowerment of PwDs, expanding access to rehabilitation programs, facilitating access to education, and the development of a vibrant sector of organizations that actively contribute to the personal, social, and economic empowerment of PwDs. Despite the progress, several challenges remain ahead. There are also threats that can potentially roll back the gains made during the last couple of years.

Research findings show that there are significant strengths and opportunities that the disability sector can capitalize on to advance the rights of PwDs. However, there are also many challenges and threats. Thus, it is imperative that CSOs and all other organizations active in the disability sector launch a coordinated advocacy action plan to take advantage of the strengths and opportunities, while addressing the weaknesses and mitigating the threats.

At the macro-level, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats primarily involve issues regarding policy making. The two primary actors include the government of Afghanistan and donors. These have a significant power over the disability sector as they shape the legal environment and funding mechanisms that govern the actions of all other relevant stakeholders. These include policies that support PwDs, funding decisions, inter-ministerial coordination, and public policy implementation.

At the macro-level, the most important item to recognize is that there is a very strong policy framework to advance the rights of PwDs. Thus, in order to capitalize on its strengths, it is important that CSOs focus

advocacy efforts on strengthening even more the current policy environment, as well as on developing policies that facilitate the inclusion of PwDs into mainstream society. It is also critical that a body for policy oversight and implementation is created to ensure regulatory stability, transparency, and accountability.

Strengths	Recommendations
<p>I: UN Convention on the Rights for People with Disabilities has been ratified by the Afghan government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework and for the creation of a coordinating body composed by Civil Society, PwDs, and government officials to oversee implementation. The oversight body must have enforcement authority to become effective.</li> </ul>
<p>II. Article 6 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which codifies the protection of female PwDs and outlines the responsibilities of the state towards that goal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework including the creation of enforcement mechanisms to ensure that the provisions that support the empowerment PwDs are properly implemented throughout all ministries. The oversight body must have the power to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>III. Article 29 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities which codifies the public and political participation of PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework and for the creation of a coordinating body composed by Civil Society, PwDs, and government officials to oversee the implementation of provisions and programs that guarantee political participation. The oversight body must have the power to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>IV. Article 21 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities which codifies the right of PwDs to freedom of expression and access to information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework regarding access to information for PwDs including passing laws that mandate media to include programs specially designed for PwDs and to include sign language translation to ensure equal access to information.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of a coordinating body composed by Civil Society, PwDs, and government officials to oversee the implementation of provisions and programs that guarantee access to freedom of information. The oversight body must have the power to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>

<p>V. Strong International and National policy framework to support PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the policy framework and for the creation of an independent coordinating body composed by Civil Society, PwDs, and government officials to oversee implementation. The oversight body must have the power to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>VI. Nascent institutional framework to oversee progress made by PwDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to further strengthen the institutional framework that oversees progress made by PwDs.</li> <li>• Advocate for further inter-ministerial coordination to advance the rights of PwDs.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>VII. 3% government quota mandate to promote employment of PwDs within government institutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the proper enforcement of the 3% employment quota.</li> <li>• Advocate for the increased collaboration between CSOs and government ministries to implement awareness-raising activities for government staff to remove some of the stigmas that prevent PwDs from accessing employment in government ministries.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> <li>• Advocate for the development and implementation of regulations that force all government buildings to have the necessary infrastructure to facilitate PwDs' mobility.</li> </ul>
<p>VIII. Ongoing efforts to increase access to education for PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to increase resources for the education sector to ensure that provision and programs that facilitate PwDs access to education are implemented.</li> <li>• Advocate for the development and implementation of regulations that force all government buildings, especially schools, to have the necessary infrastructure to facilitate PwDs mobility and access.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs,</li> </ul>

	and government officials to conduct M&E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.
IX. Ongoing efforts to increase access to health for PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize targeted advocacy efforts to capitalize on the efforts of the MoPH while ensuring that the provision of prosthetic limbs, physical rehabilitation, and other services that benefit directly PwDs become one of MoPH's key operational priorities.</li> </ul>
X. The creation of units specifically designed to serve the Needs of PwDs within government agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to improve inter-ministerial coordination between units that serve the needs of PwDs following the framework outlined in NAPWA's for gender working groups to ensure that disability becomes a cross-cutting issue throughout all government ministries.</li> <li>Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
XI. Significant support from the part of donors to assist PwDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to increase dialogue with donors and other partners for the development of demand driven programs created to address the specific needs of PwDs</li> </ul>
XII. Institutional Donors are running mine awareness programs to prevent the rise in the total number of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to increase the number of mine awareness programs in the country and use mass media to increase the reach of such programs.</li> </ul>
XIII. Mine awareness have shown to be effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to increase the number of mine awareness programs in the country and use mass media to increase the reach of such programs.</li> </ul>

In regards to weaknesses, research findings show that inter-ministerial coordination between different government ministries is weak. This has translated into a deficient implementation of the policy framework that supports PwDs. Weaknesses in general shed light over several issues that prevent the proper implementation of policies. This include the lack of capacity and coordination among government ministries, lack of data, and the absence of programs that support PwDs in a holistic way. In order to address these shortcomings, it is recommended that advocacy efforts focus at strengthening policy enforcement mechanisms.

Weaknesses	Recommendations
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<p>I. Lack of cooperation between Ministries and NGOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between NGOs, INGOs, and government ministries especially in the areas of resource sharing and capacity building.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to promote cooperation between government and NGOs</li> </ul>
<p>II. Lack of human resources and technology at the ministerial and organizational to address the needs of PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an education policy that prioritizes careers that target the needs of PwDs to ensure that enough qualified professionals are available to empower PwDs. This includes physiotherapists, braille and sign language teachers, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>III. Lack of sustainable budget from the part of government agencies to strengthen the position of oversight institutions to support PwDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to increase the budget available for the empowerment of PwDs. This includes targeting the parliament during the appropriations process, the minister of finance to prioritize PwDs in their budgets, all other ministries to ensure that funds are allocated to address the needs of PwDs including infrastructure needs, and donors to ensure that funds for PwD are increased based on the programmatic needs of the Afghanistan National Priority Program.</li> </ul>
<p>IV. Lack of capacity to improve reporting of M&amp;E findings and program achievements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the capacity of government ministries in reporting and M&amp;E to accurately reflect project achievements. In the short run international advisers can be hired through the CTAP program to fill the gap and strengthen the internal structures of government ministries.</li> </ul>
<p>V. Despite of having a legal mandate and political commitment to advance the rights of PwDs. The issue has not been a priority for all government agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise a comprehensive plan for inter-ministerial government action to strengthen the disability sector at the macro-level.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>VI. The government is unable to provide assistance to PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate a task force composed of CSOs to lobby for increased funding to support the disability sector so the government can increase the scope of its services for PwDs.</li> </ul>
<p>VII. Lack of Employment opportunities within the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate a task force composed of CSOs to</li> </ul>

<p>government despite of existing disability laws.</p>	<p>ensure the the proper implementation of the disability law that requires ministries to hire PwDs for at least 3% of its total staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> <li>• Advocate for the development and implementation of regulations that force all government buildings to have the necessary infrastructure to facilitate PwDs' mobility.</li> <li>• Support MoLSAM's efforts for the parliament's approval of a law that increases PwDs employment quota from 3% to 7%.</li> </ul>
<p>VIII. Limited outreach to PwDs from the part of the government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a thorough review of government strategies to ensure that the engagement between PwDs and government ministries increases.</li> </ul>
<p>IX. Weak policy implementation and confusion of responsibilities among government agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review coordination mechanisms between government ministries and create a task force group to monitor progress and standardize procedures.</li> </ul>
<p>X. Lack of standardization for training curriculum and teaching methodologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign the responsibility of developing training curriculums to one government ministry for the creation of materials that are homogeneous and standardized.</li> <li>• Develop policies that require minimum standards for learning and trainings.</li> </ul>
<p>XI. Despite the fact that the UNCRPD article 29 codifies the right to political participation of PwDs, GoIRA lacks the capacity to ensure that these right is exercised by PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access to political and electoral information for PwDs by providing campaign information via sing language and other means that help PwDs exercise their right to vote.</li> </ul>
<p>XII. Despite the fact that the UNCRPD article 21 codifies the right of people with disabilities to freedom of information, there are significant structural challenges to ensure PwDs right to do so.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that PwDs have access to information including internet, radio, and television and address the structural barriers that prevent PwDs from exercising their right to information. For example, the creation and support of information centers for PwDs where the latter can have access to internet, braille books, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>XIII. Lack of quantitative data regarding PwDs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement baseline survey to update quantitative data available. Emphasis should be made on estimating total number of PwDs, type of disability, location, income and</li> </ul>

	education levels, and employment status.
XIV. Disregard for psychosocial disabilities from the part of donors and disability organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the inclusion of psychological disabilities in donors' funding priorities and programs.</li> </ul>
XV. Funding provided by donors for social inclusion programs is often not sufficient to make a long-lasting and sustainable impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that enough resources are allocated to maximize the impact of donor funded projects including the provision of seed grants to launch businesses and that funding also increases at the pair of inflation.</li> </ul>
XVI. Limited role of the UN in the disability sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim advocacy efforts at increasing the role of the United Nations in the disability sector to perform the role of enforcer, policy adviser, and as a coordinating body to ensure that the concerns of the disability sector are mainstreamed in the political agenda and development priorities of the country.</li> </ul>

Concerning opportunities, research findings show that there is a significant room to expand formal education for PwDs if further support is provided. Additionally, there is room to improve the implementation of policies if further collaboration between the government and CSOs is sought. In fact, opportunities show that there is significant room for improving the current situation of PwDs; if CSOs increase collaboration and focus their advocacy efforts, significant gains can be made in a short period of time. To capitalize on these opportunities, it is critical that policy frameworks are streamlined and strengthened.

Opportunities	Recommendations
I. Significant leverage to empower PwDs by integrating them into the formal educational system through targeted interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize funding for the development of braille materials, the training of technicians, provide access to specialized transportation, and anchor these developments with the current efforts of the Ministry of Education who is currently working on expanding educational opportunities for PwDs.</li> </ul>
II. Opportunity to reduce the number of PwDs by focusing on pre-natal care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize targeted advocacy efforts to ensure that the MoPH includes the provision of pre-natal care as one of its key priorities; the reduction in the number of people disabled at birth as one of the key indicators of success.</li> </ul>
III. Lobby for the continued inclusion and advancement of the rights of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a coalition of CSOs to lobby for the proper implementation of laws that empower PwDs.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs,</li> </ul>

	and government officials to conduct M&E of project implementation, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.
IV. Conduct ongoing disability surveys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement surveys through INGOs and NGOs in different geographical areas and districts to identify opportunities for the expansion of services for PwDs. Surveys should focus on documenting location, employment status, income levels, types of disability, and levels of education.</li> </ul>
V. Strong coordination between civil society actors (NGOs and DPOs) and government agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase and strengthen partnerships and linkages between organizations active in the disability sector and the government to share ideas about projects and programs that address the needs of PwDs, support the implementation of policies and monitoring of progress, and facilitate access to areas that currently are off limits for CSOs.</li> </ul>
VI. Strengthen the mandate and scope of oversight bodies to advance the rights of PwDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the scope and mandate of the AIHCR to ensure that constitutional mandates and laws that supports PwDs are implemented.</li> </ul>
VII. Support the Expansion of Educational Opportunities for PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the expansion of Educational Opportunities for PwDs by ensuring that transportation measures are considered in education policy, provide feedback to the Ministry of Education based on lessons learned, and provide feedback for the proper design and implementation of the policy.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
VIII. The government has signaled increasing support for PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobby for the inclusion of housing, transportation, accessibility issues, and economic empowerment needs to address the obstacles that prevent the social and economic inclusion of PwDs in a holistic way.</li> </ul>
IX. Increase the participation of PwDs in elections as per article 29 of the UNCRDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between CSOs, DPOs, and government entities to facilitate the right to vote for PwDs in the upcoming election.</li> </ul>
X. Increase PwDs access to information based on Article 21 of the UN Convention for People with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a strategy to engage media in disability related issues. This can be through the legislative process by creating and alliance</li> </ul>



	<p>between CSOs and the Wolisi Jirga, or through direct engagement in coordination meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the enactment of legislation that forces media to be inclusive of PwDs needs including real-time translation in sign language.</li> </ul>
XI. Opportunity to increase employment for PwDs if the 3% quota is properly implemented by government ministries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate efforts to lobby for the execution and monitoring of the implementation of the 3% policy, and create linkages between government and CSOs' job placement programs to develop the capacity of PwDs according to the skills required by the government.</li> </ul>
XII. Opportunity to expand self-employment in the districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase linkages with government and donors to create a viable mechanisms for promoting employment opportunities especially at the district level.</li> </ul>

The largest threat at the macro-level comes from the fact that there is a weak institutional framework for policy implementation and accountability. This includes public health issues, as well as empowerment of PwDs. Thus, it is critical that advocacy efforts focus on mitigating these shortcomings as the impact that the threats can have over their operations is large and significant. This is especially true regarding the increasing number of PwDs via war related injuries, as well as corruption.

Threats	Recommendations
I. Weak enforcement mechanisms to enforce the current laws that support PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an oversight body similar to the Disability Stakeholder Coordination Group with the authority to enforce laws and with oversight powers to ensure that the implementation of laws that support PwDs are carried out. The oversight body must be composed by independent institutions including CSO representatives of organizations active in the disability sector and outside of it to guarantee its independence.</li> </ul>
II. Corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make corruption cases public through coordination bodies such as the DSCG as soon as it is learned that an individual, organization, or government official engaged in such practice. Relationships with law enforcement agencies such as the courts, attorney general, and the Afghan security forces must be strengthened to ensure that corruption</li> </ul>

	<p>complaints lead to prosecution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for making the budget and spending process public and open to the scrutiny of CSOs and independent citizens to improve transparency.</li> </ul>
III. Increasing number of PwDs due to war related injuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the outreach of mine awareness programs through TV and other mass media to include individuals living in the districts.</li> <li>• Increase funding for demining programs to reduce the number of casualties and conduct advocacy programs to reach out to AOGs with a petition requesting a reduction in the number of mines used.</li> <li>• Increase funding to strengthen the disability sector as the number of PwDs will continue to steadily increase. Thus, the system must be able to cope with the influx of war related disabilities.</li> </ul>
IV. Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek closer coordination with the security forces to mitigate the current risks associated with delivering services to PwDs in rural areas.</li> </ul>
V. Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate and launch a strong advocacy campaign to ensure that funding is provided by the Ministry of Finance during the appropriation process - Funding should be prioritized for health and education as these are two of the primary needs of PwDs – and that policies to support the development of a market based funding scheme for CSOs is developed.</li> </ul>

At the Meso-Level, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats revolve primarily around organizations that provide services to PwDs including CSOs, DPOs, and other organizations. They serve the role of intermediaries and they play a critical function as they are the mechanism that links government policies with beneficiaries. On one hand they are bound by the laws and regulations created at the meso level. On the other they are the agencies that deliver the services to PwDs.

Significant strengths within the disability sector at the meso-level includes the high degree of inter-agency cooperation, as well as the diverse number of programs and mandates that cover the needs of PwDs in a comprehensive way. This provides an excellent opportunity to capitalize on to further strengthen the disability sector by building up on previous achievements.

Strengths	Recommendations
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I. Large number of organizations active in the disability sector with different mandates that cover most of the needs of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between organizations to create synergy between programs and mandates.</li> </ul>
II. Programmatic support to develop the capacity of Afghan CSOs to advance issues related to the disability sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide further programmatic support to local CSOs to maximize the impact of activities for PwDs and partners.</li> </ul>
III. Wide range of programs that support PwDs in their different needs including social inclusion, awareness, economic empowerment, rehabilitation, accessibility, and education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between organizations to create synergy between programs and avoid duplication of efforts.</li> </ul>
IV. Wide range of programs that are inclusive of all stakeholders related the needs of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue designing programs that are inclusive of all relevant stakeholders to ensure that partners remain engaged and synergy is created to maximize impact for the benefit of PwDs.</li> </ul>
V. Long history of CSOs working for the empowerment of PwDs in Afghanistan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between new organizations and those with a long-term presence to ensure that knowledge is shared to build the institutional capacity of the disability sector.</li> </ul>
VI. Experienced organizations have a large geographical outreach although it is primarily focused on key Urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for mechanisms to engage districts adjacent to urban areas to expand the geographical reach of services provided to PwDs and end the urban bias.</li> </ul>
VII. Organizations try to outreach and accommodate to the specific needs of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide capacity building to other CSOs to increase their outreach capacity and efforts.</li> </ul>
VIII. Strong inter-agency collaboration to support PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a high degree of inter-agency cooperation to create synergy between projects, serve the needs of PwDs in a holistic way, and prevent duplication of efforts.</li> </ul>
IX. Existence of the Advocacy Committee and strong advocacy efforts from part of CSOs to advance the rights of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the ACPD and carefully plan activities in close coordination with other relevant stakeholders to advance the rights of PwDs in a holistic way.</li> </ul>
X. Programs implemented by CSOs provide financial assistance to PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue providing financial assistance to PwDs to address one of their critical needs – economic hardship –, and to provide an incentive for PwDs to continue attending CBR programs.</li> </ul>

Concerning weaknesses, findings show that local organizations have significant issues regarding the long-term sustainability of their programs, as well as limited contacts with organizations outside of the disability sector.

This makes it insular and undermines its ability to innovate and become self-sustainable. Thus, it is important that these weaknesses are addressed to strengthen its effectiveness.

Weaknesses	Recommendations
I. Limited Number of Local Organizations working on the disability sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide further support to nurture the growth of organizations that address the needs of PwDs as their number will continue to rise due to war related injuries.</li> </ul>
II. Need for more effective advocacy programs to improve society's perceptions and government's responsiveness to the needs of PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the increased coordination between organizations active in the disability sector to include psychological disabilities, the reorganization of responsibilities among different ministries, increase accessibility of public buildings and other facilities, standardize curriculums, ensure that policies that support PwDs are executed, and continue providing awareness raising campaigns.</li> </ul>
III. Projects that support PwDs are unsustainable and limited in geographical coverage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise market based approaches for project funding to ensure that programs that support PwDs are available for years to come.</li> </ul>
IV. Lack of Financial resources for CSOs to improve their effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness among donors about the need to increase flexibility in funding schemes so local organizations can capitalize and increase their effectiveness while reducing costs.</li> </ul>
V. Lack of involvement from the Board of Directors to provide Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide capacity building to board members of local organizations to ensure they remain engaged and that they perform their duties as mandated by the law.</li> </ul>
VI. Weak linkages between CSOs in the disability sector and organizations outside of it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to organizations outside of the disability sector to strengthen relationships with other relevant stakeholders who may not be directly involved with PwDs but can provide valuable services to them.</li> </ul>
VII. CBR programs often provide vocational training in trades that may not be sustainable in the long-run.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redesign CBR programs to ensure that PwDs can become self-sufficient both in the short and long-run.</li> </ul>
VIII. Limited Impact of Basic Education Courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combine Basic Education Courses with vocational training in low skilled but marketable trades such as drivers, mailmen, and guards which will make PwDs more competitive in the labor market.</li> <li>• Increase cooperation with the Ministry of Education to ensure the long-term continuity</li> </ul>

	<p>of education courses for PwDs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness-raising activities at school to sensitize students about PwDs and the contributions that they can make to prevent discrimination.</li> </ul>
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Opportunities present at the meso-level overlap with the macro level. However, there are certain areas where synergies can be created such as facilitating access to employment opportunities. The primary opportunity present at the meso-level for organizations is increased horizontal and vertical collaboration for the revision and implementation of programs, coalition building for advocacy purposes, and to improve service delivery.

Opportunities	Recommendations
I. Promote Employment through innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote employment generation through innovation such as creating resume databases for PwDs and the creation of a website where donors and employers can look for the resumes of PwDs.</li> <li>• Create a national resume database for PwDs where all organizations and government agencies can look for candidates directly.</li> </ul>
II. Programs to support the capacity development of CSOs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build the capacity of NGOs so they can take advantage of opportunities present including multi-agency coordination and advocacy strategies to advance issues related to the disability sector at the national, regional, and local levels.</li> </ul>
III. Empower PwDs through Community Based Rehabilitation Programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with local authorities and community elders to expand services in the districts where possible.</li> </ul>
IV. Empower PwDs through targeted advocacy programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement targeted advocacy programs to increase employment opportunities for PwDs, for the consolidation of the Federation of DPOs, the creation of government programs that build the capacity of DPOs and CSOs, and to lobby donors to prioritize funding for projects that target infrastructure development in government buildings and other facilities to improve accessibility.</li> </ul>
V. Network with organizations active outside of the disability sector to increase employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase linkages with organizations outside of the disability sector through awareness-raising activities, conferences, and working groups.</li> </ul>
VI. Increase resources provided to PwDs post-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide seed grants as part of a comprehensive</li> </ul>

<p>graduation from TVET programs.</p>	<p>package for PwDs' vocational training programs to maximize the number of PwDs that pursue self-employment while creating new employment opportunities for other PwDs.</p>
<p>VII. Room for expansion of successful programs if funding mechanisms become available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand services to ensure that the disability sector can cope with the growing population of PwDs due to war injuries.</li> <li>• Advocate for more funding for the implementation of programs both from the government of Afghanistan and international donors to increase funding available given the growing number of PwDs.</li> </ul>
<p>VIII. Increase collaboration between local CSOs, as well as CSOs and INGOs, to improve service delivery and capacity building.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase collaboration between local CSOs and INGOs for capacity building, program design, funding, expertise, revision of vocational training curriculum, employment for PwDs, and to create coalitions for advocacy purposes.</li> <li>• Increase partnerships between local CSOs including NGOs and DPOs for advocacy activities, implementation of community education programs and awareness raising activities, improve service delivery, and increase the geographical coverage of the organizations to capture funding for undeserved areas.</li> </ul>
<p>IX. Potential for increased outreach with MRRD, MoEc, INGOs, and local NGOs active outside of the disability sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cooperation between government ministries including MRRD, MoEC, MMD, MoPH, MoHE, and MoEd, and local CSOs for policy making to ensure that the provisions set forth in the Afghanistan Compact, the ACBP, and the ANAPD are implemented.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
<p>X. Increased Transparency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an oversight body to ensure transparency and accountability among organizations, strengthen anti-corruption laws, create channels for denouncing corrupt practices, and increase linkages with the security services to ensure prosecution.</li> </ul>

Threats at the meso-level are clustered around the themes of security, changes in the regulatory framework and market trends, as well as reduction of funding; the former being the largest threat present. Thus, it is necessary that CSOs increase their engagement with the government to ensure long-term stability.

Threats	Recommendations
I. Decreasing funding and more reliance on the government to award grants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobby the government, especially the Ministry of Finance, to ensure that budget appropriations remain at the current levels of funding.</li> <li>• CSOs must develop new market based mechanisms to obtain funding to break from their donor dependency.</li> </ul>
II. Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with community elders and local shuras to raise their awareness about programs that support PwDs. Ask them for guarantees regarding the security of staff members if the organization works in insecure areas.</li> </ul>
III. Changes in the regulatory framework can threaten the activities of CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become involved in policy making decisions to ensure regulatory stability.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of an independent oversight body composed by PwDs, CSOs, and government officials to conduct M&amp;E, as well as to enforce its own dictates and provisions to be effective.</li> </ul>
IV. Changes within market trends can threaten the long-term sustainability of economic empowerment programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct market research and adjust the curriculum of vocational training and basic education programs according to changes in the labor market and consumer preferences to ensure they remain current.</li> </ul>

At the micro-level strengths primarily cluster around the positive impact that activities implemented by organizations bring to the lives of PwDs. These promote employment, reduce the stigma associated with disability, they increase the self-esteem of PwDs, and most importantly, they allow PwDs to achieve self-sufficiency. Thus it is critical that CSOs capitalize on these strengths to bolster the disability sector.

Strengths	Recommendations
I. Commitment to raise social awareness about people's with disabilities rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue implementing and expand the scope of awareness-raising activities to challenge the social stigma associated with disability to open new opportunities for the empowerment of PwDs.</li> </ul>

II. Commitment from the part of PwDs to participate in empowerment programs including education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture PwDs's commitment to continue being engaged in programs and activities.</li> </ul>
III. Programs that target mobility issues are being implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand programs that target mobility issues to address one of the key obstacles that prevent PwDs from becoming actively engaged in their communities.</li> </ul>
IV. Follow up Programs to support PwDs' employment are being implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen employment programs for PwDs through innovation and by increasing linkages between NGOs and the private sector.</li> </ul>
V. Economic empowerment including basic education and vocational trainings implemented by CSOs achieve intended goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen economic empowerment programs including basic education and vocational trainings by constantly revising the curriculum and making the skills relevant to market needs.</li> </ul>
VI. CBR Programs and activities increase beneficiaries' self-esteem and promotes self-sufficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen economic empowerment including basic education and vocational trainings to ensure that PwDs remain employed in the long-run to further increase beneficiaries' self-esteem and self-sufficiency.</li> </ul>
VII. Evidence that PwDs are hired by other PwDs who are running organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen relationships with micro-enterprises run by PwDs active in the informal economy to widen employment opportunities for low-skilled PwDs.</li> <li>• Support PwDs led businesses by advocating for the creation of infrastructure that improve their mobility.</li> </ul>
VIII. Awareness raising activities are effective at sensitizing communities about PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue implementing awareness raising activities to sensitize communities.</li> </ul>
IX. Skills developed by beneficiaries of programs are sustainable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise training curriculums periodically to ensure that the skills remain relevant to the market place.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation of infrastructure that facilitates PwDs' access to government buildings and other institutions to increase mobility and, thus, reduce one of the main obstacles that prevent PwDs from becoming economically independent.</li> </ul>

In regards to weaknesses, research findings show that local organizations have significant issues regarding the long-term sustainability of programs, as well as limited contacts with organizations outside of the disability sector. This makes it insular and undermines its ability to innovate and become self-sustainable. Additionally, some findings point at a significant weakness regarding social attitudes towards women, as well as the discrimination of PwDs. It also brings into light the fact that donors often provide limited resources for the empowerment of PwDs. Thus, it is needed that comprehensive strategies are created to address these issues.



Weaknesses	Recommendations
I. Lack of awareness about the rights and potential contributions of PwDs among Afghan Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the scope of awareness-raising activities and advocacy activities to ensure that the government disseminates positive information regarding PwDs through major media outlets.</li> </ul>
II. Discrimination limit the potential contributions PwDs can make to society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the scope of awareness-raising campaigns and advocacy activities to ensure that the government enacts and enforces strong anti-discrimination laws in Afghanistan.</li> </ul>
III. Gender Biases Reduce the Impact of Programs that support PwDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include gender related information to awareness raising programs to improve the status of women and facilitate their access to programs that will benefit female PwDs.</li> </ul>
IV. Limited means of transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand programs that address mobility issues for PwDs.</li> <li>• Advocate for legislation that requires public transit to have the required infrastructure to transport PwDs</li> </ul>
V. Lack of comprehensive programs that address the needs of PwDs in a comprehensive way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to increase the amount of resources of donor funded projects and design programs using a comprehensive approach to address the root causes of PwDs' poverty.</li> </ul>
VI. Ineffective Health Care Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus advocacy activities to improve women's health while increasing access to high quality healthcare to decrease the number of birth defects that can lead to disability.</li> <li>• Focus advocacy efforts on expanding the network of clinics that are specialized in providing services to PwDs.</li> </ul>
VII. Discrimination creates barriers for PwDs to access education, employment, and other services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus awareness-raising activities in schools, the private sector, and government entities to prevent harassment and bullying against PwDs.</li> </ul>

In regards to opportunities, these are scarce at the micro-level. They cluster around the provision of materials to improve access mobility, increased living standards through employment, increased social interactions to develop social networks as means of a safety net, and political mobilization. These opportunities can address a critical constraints that place a significant obstacle for the empowerment of PwDs.

Opportunities	Recommendations
I. Ongoing efforts to supply PwDs with materials to improve access mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximize the impact of CBR programs, economic empowerment activities, and basic education courses by incorporating mobility issues within program design.</li> </ul>
II. PwDs are highly motivated to participate in electoral processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for the creation programs that support the political engagement of PwDs.</li> </ul>
III. Opportunities to increase interactions and social capital for PwDs if a nurturing environment is provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create opportunities for the social interaction between PwDs aiming at developing a strong social network as a coping mechanism against a weak safety net.</li> </ul>
IV. Increased living standards for PwDs if employment opportunities are available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create new employment schemes to promote PwD employment.</li> <li>Involve PwDs in the lobbying efforts for the implementation of the 3% government employment quota requirement.</li> </ul>
V. Increased advocacy opportunities and political leverage for PwDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate advocacy efforts between grassroots organizations and the ACPD, to increase their impact.</li> <li>Nurture political activism at the grassroots level to increase the political leverage that PwDs have.</li> </ul>

Threats at the micro-level are clustered around the themes of economic insecurity and potential physical harm. This comes from the fact that they are one of the most vulnerable groups within Afghan society. Therefore, it is critical that CSOs active in the disability sector focus their efforts to bring the disability issue to the national agenda. In such way, mitigating strategies can be put in place to ensure that the gains of the past years are sustainable.

Threats	Recommendations
I. Threat of economic deprivation due to lack of employment opportunities and high unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase advocacy efforts for the implementation of the 3% law to open job opportunities for PwDs within the government sector, link PwDs with programs such as ABADE and AREDP to improve the business prospects of those who are already running a business, improve access to finance and provide seed grants for PwDs, and include apprenticeship projects at factories, offices, and government entities to improve the skills of PwDs.</li> </ul>

<p>II. Discrimination can lead to PwDs depression and to take extreme actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to increase awareness-raising activities that aim at removing the stigma against PwDs through mass media and to pressure donors and GoIRA to include psychological support for PwDs to deal with mental disabilities.</li> <li>• Create a hotline to provide psychological support for PwDs during times of crisis.</li> </ul>
<p>III. Lack of infrastructure to accommodate to the needs of PwDs can result in life threatening situations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus advocacy activities on infrastructure development to make the environment accessible for PwDs to minimize the risk of life threatening accidents.</li> </ul>
<p>IV. Weak safety net to protect PwDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus advocacy activities to ensure that the government includes the provision of shelter for PwDs as one of its top priorities along with economic support for those who have lost family members to provide a safety net for PwDs.</li> </ul>
<p>V. Insecurity can also pose a risk for PwDs long-term financial security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the development of emergency response plans in policies that support PwDs to ensure a proper and timely response if economic decline threaten the livelihoods of PwDs.</li> </ul>
<p>VI. Limited choices for PwDs can translate into forcing PwDs into social arrangements that go against their will and may be harmful for the integrity of the individual.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create legal mechanisms to prevent PwDs from being forced into social arrangements that may threaten their physical integrity. It is also critical that women shelters specialized in female PwDs are created to protect vulnerable women.</li> </ul>
<p>VII. Corruption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create better linkages with the security sector and a direct channel between citizens and donors where the former can denounce organizations that engage in these practices to prevent corruption.</li> </ul>

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