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## ANALYSIS

# Implementing the World Report on Disability in West Africa

## Challenges and Opportunities for Ghana

### ABSTRACT

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Disability issues have taken a prominent role on international stages in recent years. Beginning with the May 2005 World Health Assembly Resolution 58.23 and culminating in the June 2011 World Bank and World Health Organization World Report on Disability, comprehensive disability analyses from nations at various stages of development can now be accessed and used by relevant stakeholders in health, policy, and aide arenas. The implementation of this landmark report is critical for the advancement of social inclusion in diverse countries, including those with limited resources. However, activating the World Report on Disability in resource-limited countries remains a significant challenge because of threadbare data and cultural, institutional, and physical barriers to social inclusion. This review summarizes current national disability data and describes challenges and opportunities for the implementation of the World Report on Disability in Ghana. As a structural point of departure, the article uses the three broad categories of challenges outlined by the World Health Organization: attitudinal, physical, and institutional.

**Key Words:** Rehabilitation, Persons with Disability, Epidemiology, Policy

**A**s stated by the preamble to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the understanding of disability is continually evolving.<sup>1</sup> The well known medical model of disability in which individual health conditions frame impairment, disability, and handicap is different from the social model of disability that highlights contextual factors. Recently, an integrative, universal biopsychosocial model of disability has emerged.<sup>2</sup> Here, disability is appropriately understood as a dynamic interaction between health conditions and both internal and external environmental factors. This is the central concept around which present-day disability dialogues pivot.<sup>3</sup> With increasing frequency and momentum, these conversations are unfolding on the highest stages of international decision making.<sup>4</sup>

The 2006 United Nations' CRPD lays bare the full complement of human rights to which persons with disability (PWDs) are entitled including civil,