

# Young People with Disabilities – A Vital Constituency in Development

by Gopal Mitra



## 2 Realities and 3 Myths

Result of exclusion from the development process:

- Divergence from the mainstream
- Absence of data and evidence base on the life realities of adolescents and young people with disabilities



- Perception of eternal childhood
- Needs of Young People with disabilities are often perceived to be Specific to their Disability
- Huge resources are required to include young people with disabilities in policies and programmes

“UNICEF is committed to supporting the global effort to break down the barriers that prevent children living with disabilities from full participation in society. Together, we can ensure that children living with disabilities have an equal chance to make the most of their lives, and in so doing, build a better world for us all.”

Anthony Lake, Executive Director UNICEF  
2011 International Day of Persons with Disabilities

## Strengthening of Mandate

- **Equity** means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop, and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias, or favoritism, regardless of gender, race, disability, religious beliefs, income, geographical location, or other status.
- **Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)**

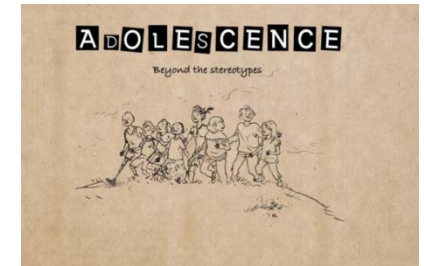


# Inclusive practices

- Opportunity in Crisis, UNICEF 2011  
<http://www.unicef.org/aids/index.html>



- Adolescence: Beyond the Stereotypes, UNICEF 2011  
<http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/index.html>



- Children and Adolescents with disabilities and HIV/AIDS. Guidelines for Inclusion. (Will be available in 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2012)
- Case studies on importance of reaching out to young women with disabilities for prevention of mother to child transmission.



## **Moving toward greater inclusiveness**

- Establishment and the expansion of the Disability Unit , GRACE– led by Senior Advisor on Children with Disabilities
- Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities – consultation with key stakeholders
- UNICEF co-chairing the UN Interagency Support Group on Disability
- UNICEF participates in the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Capacity building of UNICEF on disability issues
- Interdivisional Working Group on Disability
- Development of the accessible website
- State of the World Children report 2013

# Moving forward

- Partnership and Collaborations
- Inclusion of youth in the “disability” agenda and “disability” in youth agenda
- Inclusion in post-MDG frameworks

