



THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINSTREAMING DISABILITY IN POLICY FORMULATION

ALICE PEARCE
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The Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) is a public policy research think tank whose vision is “Unlocking Zambia’s Potential”.

■ PMRC STATED AIM

- Producing high quality, relevant and timely public policy analysis, delivery monitoring and reform proposals.
- Promoting and encouraging informed public debate on social and economic policy issues critical to national development.



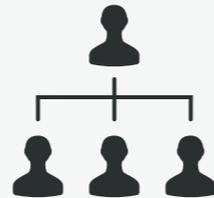
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Parastatals Governance Work, Government Policy Series



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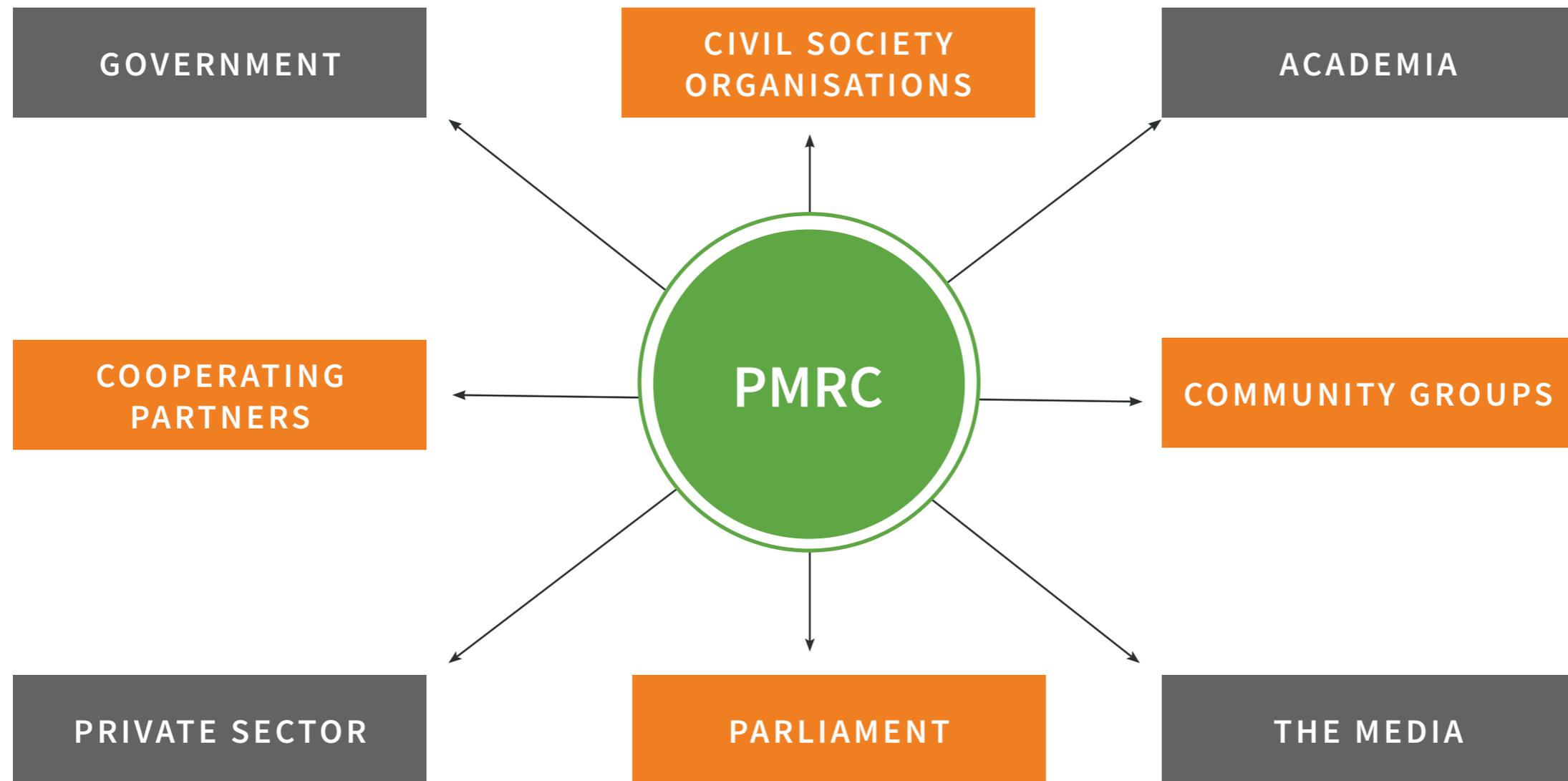


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Child Marriages, Social and Development Livelihood, Child Protection Social Cash transfer Education, Health, Employment and Human Development

INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES

WHO DO WE WORK WITH



THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINSTREAMING DISABILITY IN POLICY FORMULATION

INTRODUCTION



- Persons with disabilities are disproportionately excluded from participating in and benefiting from development.
- They are at high risk of living in poverty and of having their human rights unfulfilled.
- Disability is both a cause and consequence of poverty: poor people are more likely to have disabilities, and PWDs are more likely to be poor.

- The 2010 Census Statistics Report indicates that there are

251,427 persons with disabilities in Zambia.

- This is a significant section of the population that is at risk of being excluded and marginalized.

WHAT IS DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING?



- Mainstreaming is about disabled people **participating at all levels of society** according to his/her choice without facing any barrier.
- Mainstreaming disability is a public policy concept of assessing the different implications for PWDs of any planned policy action, including legislation and programmes in all areas and levels.
- This will ensure PWDs live with dignity in a society where there would be **no obstacle or barriers for inclusion** and they will be able to enjoy their rights and give their opinions.
- It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of PWDs an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that they benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.
- The ultimate goal is to achieve **equality among all persons.**

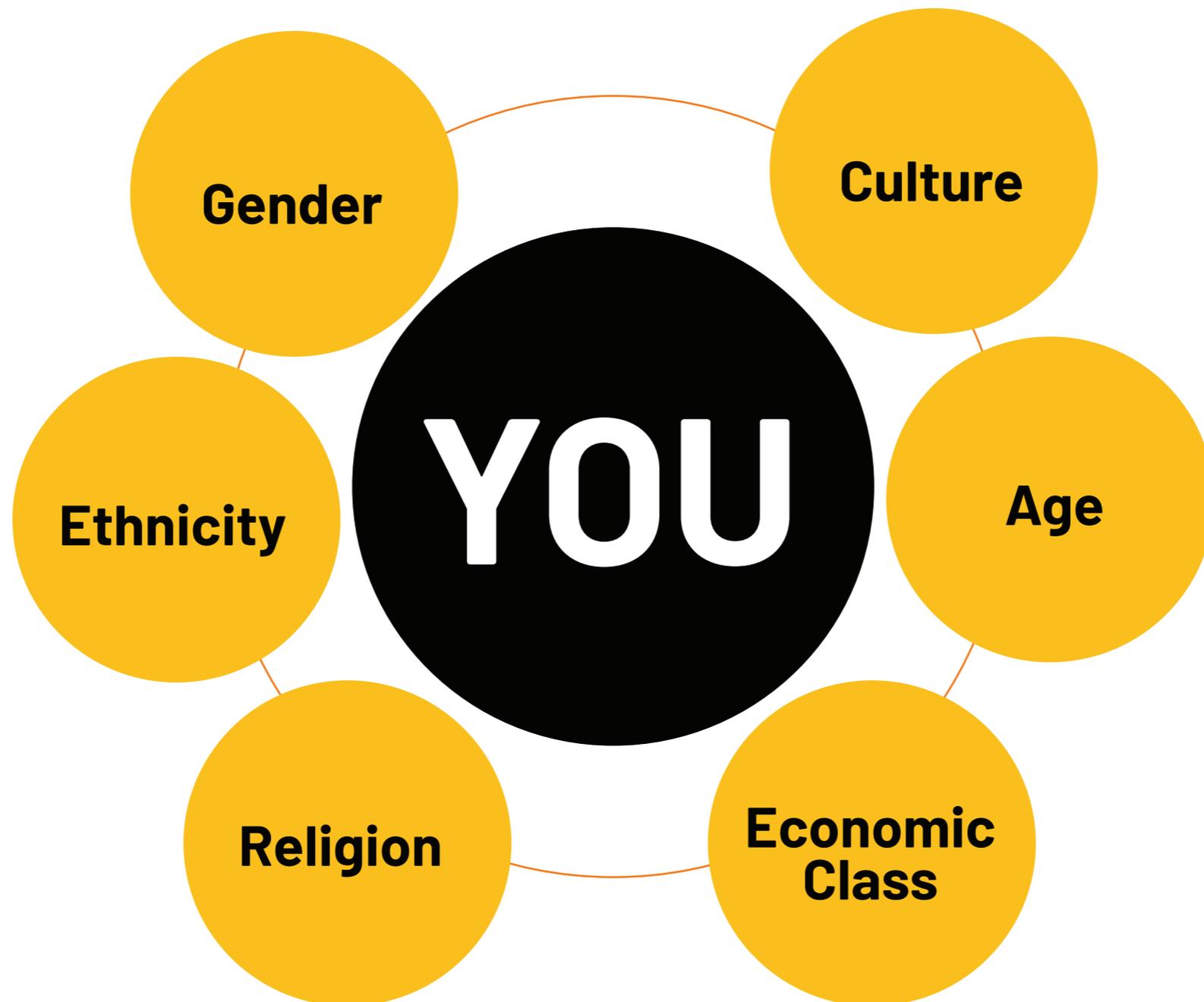
WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES?

- Mainstreaming essentially offers a holistic approach that values the diversity among people in society.
 - **Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda is a strategy for achieving equality for persons with disabilities.**
 - **Mainstreaming is not a one-size fits all set of results or activities**
 - By using a Human Rights approach, mainstreaming has to be transformational in nature.
 - It should challenge societal norms and values that limit the potential of PWDs.
 - Through the recognition of the rights of PWDs, policy makers can reduce disparities and enhance equality and non-discrimination factors, which often underlie development problems.
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THE INTERSECTIONAL NATURE OF DISABILITY

- **Policy makers should take into account that PWDs are not a homogenous group that face the same challenges**
 - Intersectionality identifies characteristics that shape an individual's experiences, i.e class, ethnicity, age, religion, disability and gender.
 - It is the idea that these layers do not exist separately from each other but intersect to form a person's identity, and can magnify the discrimination and marginalisation they might experience.
 - Therefore, understanding that disability can converge with other factors to further impact an individual negatively is critical
 - This will also mean that the experiences of PWDs vary between individuals and their needs will also be different.
 - For instance, PWDs who are empowered may not share the same experiences as those who are living in poverty or in a rural setup.
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THE INTERSECTIONAL NATURE OF DISABILITY



SHAPING POLICY THROUGH THE LENS OF INCLUSION



- Disability mainstreaming helps to improve the quality of public policies, programmes and projects.
- It ensures a more efficient allocation of resources towards programs/policies to respond to the unique needs of PWDs.
- Ultimately, disability-responsive policies improve the well-being of PWDs, and the creation of a more socially just and sustainable society.
- Analysing a problem/policy through the lens of disability inclusion: Helps identify unique issues that affect PWDs differently.
- Thus ensuring public policies are responsive to PWDs.

FINDING THE LOST VOICES FOR DISABILITY RESPONSIVE POLICY FORMULATION

Questions to ask when developing programs/policies

- Which communities are served and which are not? Why?
- Who gets to participate and who does not? Why?
- Who has access to resources and support and who does not? Why?

Who's voices get heard and who's do not? Why?

Answering these questions is very important to ensure participation and inclusion when designing policies/ programs.

This will ensure that we have representation of different groups in order to make sound policy decisions

FINDING THE LOST VOICES



VOICES

- **Participation and engagement at all levels of development** - household, community and national levels
 - Dissagregated data is important to shape policy (up-to-date statistics are very critical in policy formulation)
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CHALLENGES FOR MAINSTREAMING DISABILITY



- **Lack of political will by policy markers:** PWDs may be left out when formulating important policies that may have a direct or indirect impact on them.
- **Inadequate human, technical and financial investments:** staff or policy markers may not be disability sensitive or aware. Staff may not have the technical know how of integrating disability in policy formulation.
- **Weak coordination and monitoring mechanisms:** lack of disability disaggregated data to inform policy implications i.e. Census comes after 10 years which may be too long.

CHALLENGES FOR MAINSTREAMING DISABILITY



- **Insufficient data and research:** not enough information to influence policy makers to take a disability inclusion approach on a particular matter.
- **Not taking account of individual diversity and positionalities:** assuming there is homogeneity of a group i.e. socio-economic class, gender, disability, physical location e.t.c

STRATEGIES FOR DISABILITY INCLUSION IN POLICY

- **Engagement and participation of PWDs in policy formulation** - this can be done at political level, persons with disabilities need to have a voice in governance issues because that is where decisions are made.
 - **Strengthen education services and information dissemination to PWDs** to ensure full participation at all levels
 - Empower PWDs through employment and economic opportunities in order to improve their quality of life as well strengthen their position in society
 - **Prioritise PWDs in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies** to ensure their needs are at the core of interventions
 - Adopt a rights-based approach in the formulation and implementation of policies
 - Consider the different positionalities of PWDs and how their needs differ from each other- avoid one-size fits all approaches
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THANK YOU



Unlocking Zambia's Potential Response to this presentation can be sent to: info@pmrczambia.net

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