

## Appendix 1: Elements, Themes, Concepts and Representative Data

| Elements, Themes, Concepts   | Representative Data  |
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| <b>CHALLENGES</b>  |  |
| <b><u>External Obstacles</u></b>   |  |
| <b>1. Social and attitudinal barriers</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social discrimination</li> </ul>                              | <p><i>"I wouldn't disclose my disability when applying for jobs. However, as soon as they (the managers) saw me, they would have a reaction, most times not in a positive way. Sometimes, they let me finish the interview to pretend. A couple of times I was rejected immediately when they saw me in the beginning of interview..." (F13)</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being excluded from society</li> </ul>                        | <p><i>"When I was little, there were no schools for children like us, and we needed to receive education and to be a part of the society. My physical limitation does not affect my brain." (M6)</i></p>   |
| <b>2. Constraints on development</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of job opportunities</li> </ul>                          | <p><i>"I was looking for jobs for more than a year. I couldn't deal with it any more. It's really hard to feel left out from society." (F13)</i></p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of economic support</li> </ul>                           | <p><i>"Yes, it was very difficult, since several times I asked for support from the president of the municipality and they never supported me." (M2)</i></p>   |
| <b>3. Institutional barriers</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low trust towards government agents and NGOs</li> </ul>       | <p><i>"My friend, who helped create and set up [the institution] got kicked out because he wouldn't agree to participate in activities that were not in line with the purpose of the organisation. He, who also has a physical disability, was not going to take money without justification." (M6)</i></p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate legal and institutional support</li> </ul>         | <p><i>"I found difficulties at bureaucratic levels; there aren't processes for people with disabilities. (Spain's) government officers don't seem to care about helping us." (M11)</i></p>   |
| <b>4. Environmental constraints</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate facilities in the public space</li> </ul>          | <p><i>"there are urban accessibility regulations but they are not complied with here (rural areas); on an architectural level, we seem to be the same as most other countries I know." (M7)</i></p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate facilities and support in the workplace</li> </ul> | <p><i>"After the accident, the company was very nice to me but unfortunately they couldn't hire me back because the offices were on the second floor and there was no access for me." (F4)</i></p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate accessibility in transportation</li> </ul>         | <p><i>"public transportation is totally inefficient for people with disabilities. Some of the taxi drivers would not be willing to help you if they saw you in a wheelchair, and if I wanted a private car, I would spend most of my salary on it." (M11)</i></p>  |

## **Individual Restrictions**

### **5. Personal conditions**

- Physical restriction
- Psychological stress

*“When I started noticing the first effects of my disease [Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis], I went back to Spain to figure out what was actually happening at a physical level... the feeling of no longer being able to move with autonomy made everything really hard.” (M5)*

*“it is not common to see people with disabilities on the street. Disabled people may isolate themselves, feeling depressed because society looks down upon us, as if we were sick and not able to do anything or participate in activities.” (F4)*

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## **ADAPTIVE MECHANISMS**

### **External support mechanisms**

#### **6. Supportive social network**

- Family, friends, peers, religious groups

*“When I was a kid, my parents sent me to normal school and made me participate in regular social activities. I am really grateful I grew up with this connection to the real world.” (M6)*

*“Although we all have impairments, here [in the group], we treat each other as normal people and believe in each other—this has helped me a lot, emotionally.” (M1)*

#### **7. Access to diverse resources**

- Education and training
- Internet resources and technology
- New financing alternatives
- Assistive technologies
- Media exposure

*“Education should be a priority for everyone. Education helped me gain knowledge and develop skills, which has been really important for my development.” (M8)*

*“My physical condition doesn’t allow me to go out and visit warehouses, distributor stores or attend events. But through digital marketing, we can make a better product launch with internet technology support.” (M5)*

*“The internet has allowed me to break barriers and achieve goals which were previously unattainable for me due to my disability.” (M10)*

*“Seeking funding is always hard; luckily we had a slight push from [organisation] and started a crowdfunding project.” (M5)*

*“some companies hired people with disabilities to test their newly developed software for collecting research data or marketing surveys. Getting the opportunity to learn and trial these new ATs helped us a lot as users, and also inspired me in my own business development” (M6).*

*“Support from the media has provided more attention than I thought. After some interviews, I was surprised by the response from people. [It] brought in many clients.” (M12)*

## **Developing positive personal characteristics**

### **8. Developing individual motivation**

- Pursuit of economic independence *“people with disability need to support themselves and their families, just like those without any disability” (M11)*
- Proving personal social value *“even if this [business] didn’t work, I would still have tried other things because I don’t like feeling that I’m useless” (F4)*
- Mission to help other disabled people *“when people realise you are a successful business owner, despite your impairments, they start respecting you more. This has made me more confident, and I believe it will also make other disabled people more confident and give them hope”(M8)*

### **9. Developing personal qualities**

- Entrepreneurial spirit *“Being my own boss has given me the satisfaction I don’t think I would find anywhere else. With so many challenges and difficulties experienced, it’s the dream of being an entrepreneur stimulates me to keep on trying and not giving up ”(F3)*
- Patience and perseverance *“My desire is to show the world and mainly myself that the ability to get where you want is based on much effort, love and perseverance.” (F3)*
- Creativity *“Even at home, the use of appliances wasn’t accessible. I had to mark light all switches with [braille] dots. Then, eventually, I entered the world of computing and started to see solutions.” (M7)*
- Risk taking *“If I had been afraid of starting something on my own, I would still be depending on everyone else, and I wouldn’t feel self-accomplished as I do now” (M12).*

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## **RESULTS**

### **Business Results**

#### **10. Business achievements**

- Good business sense and understanding of the disabled market *“Being a person who needs a wheelchair to move, I started thinking of what I needed, then realised other persons in the same condition have similar needs, so I started thinking of the idea of a wheelchair-friendly guesthouse, no steps and spacious bathrooms. [I thought:] I would definitely feel very comfortable in a place like that.” (M12)*
- Innovative business ideas for products/service for disabled customers *“We try to bridge the digital gap by auditing existing technologies, developing our own software, application, domotic installations in physical spaces. [...] Domotics helps adapt people’s houses, kind of smart houses.” (M7)*

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## **Personal Results**

### ***11. Personal achievements***

- Economic independence

*“I feel motivated when I know I make my family proud and also when I satisfy my clients by delivering quality food” (F13).*

- Social recognition

*“Now that I am somewhat ‘known’, I can demonstrate what we [the physically disabled] are capable of. All we need is an opportunity.” (M11)*

### ***12. Social impacts***

- Creating job opportunities and a good working environment for disabled employees

*“I only hire people with disabilities and they work from their homes using IP technology. In this way we eliminate transportation barriers for the disabled” (M10).*

- Acting as a role model to motivate other disabled people

*“When people see you can do the same things as them, even if you struggle a little more or [it] takes you a little more time, they start seeing you as a role model.” (M6)*

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