

دائرة تنمية المجتمع  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT



**WE  
ARE  
ONE**

Abu Dhabi  
Strategy for People  
of Determination  
2020-2024

#استراتيجية\_أبوظبي\_لأصحاب\_الهمم  
#AbuDhabiStrategyForPOD



# Table of Content

## CHAPTER ONE

People of Determination in the emirate of Abu Dhabi

Page 9



## CHAPTER TWO

About the strategy: Vision, Mission and Strategic objectives

Page 11

## CHAPTER THREE

The Strategy Guiding Principles

Page 15



## CHAPTER FOUR

Strategy Taskforces

Page 19

## CHAPTER FIVE

30 initiatives planned till 2024

Page 21



**From His Highness Sheikh  
Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan,  
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and  
Deputy Supreme Commander of  
the Armed Forces**



“ You are an essential part of the journey towards development and success. We work with you to make Abu Dhabi a leading city in the area of empowerment and inclusion of POD within an integrated strategy and through innovative opportunities to enhance your role in building and developing your community. ”

## From Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Council



“ Abu Dhabi's Strategy for People of Determination is an essential step towards greater inclusion and empowerment of this core group of society, with the aim of unleashing their full potential to become an integral part of our nation's development process and to accomplish further excellence and achievements. ”

## From His Excellency Dr. Mugheer Khamis Al Khaili, Chairman of the Department of Community Development in Abu Dhabi



“ The Abu Dhabi Strategy for People of Determination is a ground-breaking paradigm shift that reflects the leadership’s keen interest in empowering all groups within the society and providing a decent life for all. As the entity responsible for implementing the Social Sector Agenda in Abu Dhabi, we launched the strategy to serve as an integrated system of policies and programs that ensure the empowerment of People of Determination as catalysts for social change. We continuously work towards making Abu Dhabi the role model of an inclusive and cohesive society. ”



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## Chapter One

People of Determination in the  
emirate of Abu Dhabi

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## POD challenges in the emirate of Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi is home to around 20,000 People of Determination (POD), both nationals and residents. Neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disability, and specific learning disorders are among the most common disabilities in the emirate.

POD also face a number of challenges resulting from physical, communication, attitudinal, and organisational barriers that exist in society. Among these challenges are the lack of comprehensive and integrated educational, social and health systems of care, which hinders the access of POD and their families to quality services that meet their individual and varied needs at affordable and reasonable prices.

Abu Dhabi is home to around



**20,000 POD**

both nationals and residents

When it comes to education, students of determination lack equal and fair opportunities to access quality inclusive education in mainstream schools with a comprehensive support system including an enabling school and classroom environment, qualified school personnel, support services, awareness, accredited alternative educational pathways and curricula including vocational and technical qualifications that ensure the availability of options and alternatives that meet different needs and mechanisms and standards to support students' transition through different educational levels and systems.

As for employment, POD have limited access to employment opportunities in an open work environment due to a number of factors: employers have insufficient incentives and support to hire POD and retain them, shortage of quality vocational education, training and rehabilitation opportunities and program during pre and post work placement to enhance POD skills and readiness to transition to work as well as the lack of a comprehensive inclusive employment policy with enforcement mechanism and clear roles and responsibilities among relevant entities.

POD also face barriers when it comes to community participation in public life such as arts, culture, recreation, sports and volunteering as a result of the lack of an accessible environment including built environment, transportations, housing, products, programs, services and information.

Additionally, POD and their families incur high costs as a result of the additional expenses related to the disability, which impact their standard of living and quality of life.

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## Chapter Two

### About the strategy: Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives

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# Abu Dhabi Strategy for People of Determination 2020-2024

A comprehensive and integrated roadmap towards the inclusion and the empowerment of POD

The strategy aims to transform Abu Dhabi into an inclusive and empowering community for POD by breaking down all barriers that prevent them from accessing the rights, services and equitable opportunities and by building a comprehensive support system for POD and their families, as they are an integral part of the community development process.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Chairman of the Executive Council of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, launched the strategy to affirm its importance.

As for the development of the strategy, the Department of Community Development, in cooperation with relevant entities, conducted an assessment of the quality of life and the current situation of POD and their families in the emirate of Abu Dhabi across areas and sectors. This exercise revealed that POD and their families face a number of challenges that prevent their access to rights, services and opportunities on a equal basis with others. And accordingly, the Abu Dhabi Strategy for POD has been developed in collaboration with all stakeholders to develop a roadmap to bridge gaps in accordance with global best practices and enable POD to reach their full potential.

The strategy covers the life span of POD and includes the following areas: health and rehabilitation, education, employment, social care and protection, participation in public social, sports, cultural and recreational life, universal access to built environment, facilities, transportation, housing and information. In addition to addressing key enablers across areas such as quality of services, local capacity building through awareness and training, sustainable financing, data and research, good governance frameworks to activate the participation of different sectors while clarifying roles and responsibilities and ensuring accountability and responding to the needs of POD and their families.



## Our Vision

An inclusive and empowering community for People of Determination.



## Our Mission

To support people of determination and their families through an integrated system that offers high quality services ensuring their full contribution in society along with private and third sector participation.



## Strategic Objectives

Build a community culture based on the human-rights perspective of disability

Support POD and their families in their role as catalysts of societal change towards an inclusive society

Create an inclusive environment to enable equal and improved POD access to rights, opportunities and services across all life stages

Ensure delivery of integrated high-quality services across government, private and third sectors

Establish evidence-based, data-driven and sustainable legislative framework for POD and their families



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## Chapter Three

### The Strategy Guiding Principles



#### The Role of People of Determination



The strategy emphasizes the principle of leadership, participation and representation of POD in line with the principle of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities "Nothing for us without us" and therefore POD are represented and have active participation in each of the strategy taskforces as individuals as well as associations that represent POD.

#### The paradigm shift adopted by the Strategy: Shifting from a medical perspective of disability to a social and rights-based perspective



The strategy aims to transform the Emirate of Abu Dhabi into an inclusive and empowering community through a shift to a social and rights-based disability perspective which affirms that the disability is not inherent to the individual but is a consequence of the environmental, attitudinal and organizational barriers in society that POD encounter and prevent them from participation, inclusion and reaching their full potential. It also promotes the right to independent living, self-determination and access to rights, services and opportunities on an equal basis as others.

## Medical Model

The problem lies within the PoD

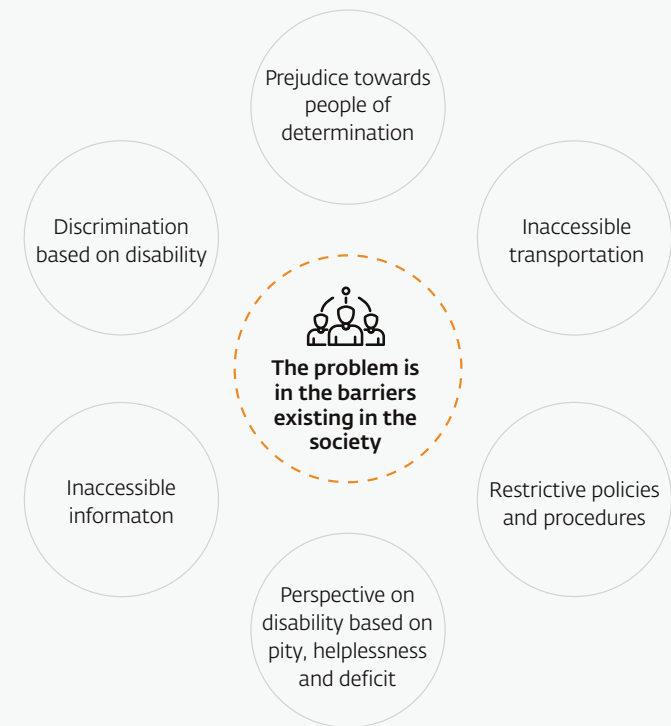


Disability = POD



## Social and Rights-based model

The problem is in the barriers existing in the society



Disability = Impairment X Barriers

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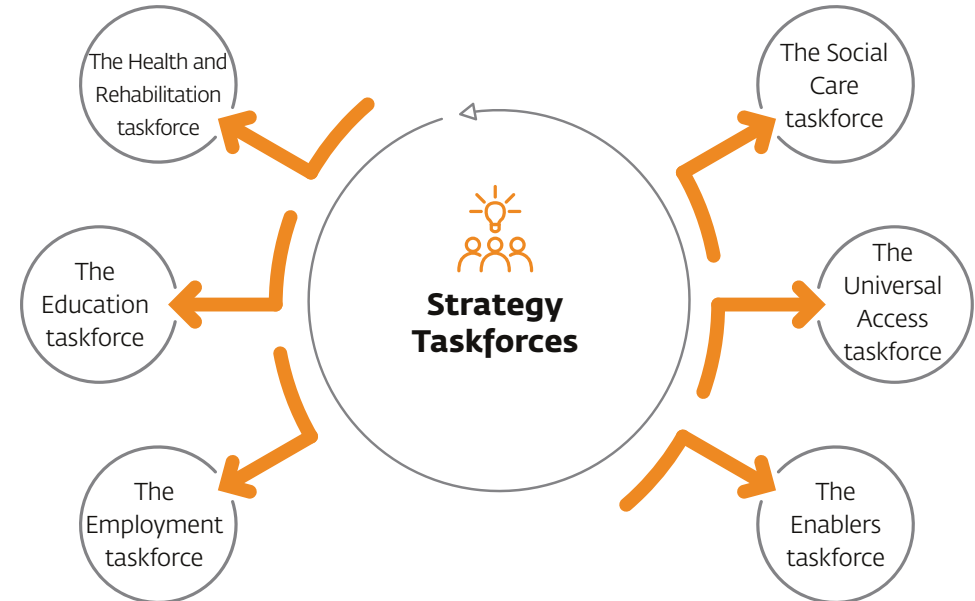
## Chapter Four Strategy Taskforces

### Strategy Taskforces

The strategy adopts the concept of disability mainstreaming across sectors so that the POD agenda becomes a shared responsibility within the emirate and is everyone responsibility.

The strategy will be implemented in a collaborative and integrated manner through 6 taskforces assigned respectively to 6 strategic pillars. Each taskforce has a lead entity and representation from relevant entities from the local government, federal government, private sector, third sector through organizations representing POD and POD themselves. Each taskforce will be managing the delivery of specific initiatives.

The Health and Rehabilitation taskforce, led by the department of health. The Education taskforce, led by the Department of Education and Knowledge. The Employment taskforce, led by the Human Resources Authority. The Social Care taskforce, led by the Zayed Higher Organization for People of Determination. The Universal Access taskforce, led by the Department of Municipalities and Transport. The Enablers workforce, led by the Department of Community Development.



The Department of Community Development as the custodian of the strategy will ensure the communication, coordination, and alignment between all the taskforces as well as oversight on the strategy execution in order to reach the set objectives in collaboration with all partners.

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## Chapter Five

### 30 Initiatives Planned till 2024

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## 30 Initiatives Planned till 2024

30 initiatives will be implemented within the next 5 years.



### Health and Rehabilitation Pillar Initiatives

1. Developing a unified, comprehensive, and integrated assessment framework for POD
2. Early Intervention Program
3. Assistive Technologies Program



### Education Pillar Initiatives

4. The inclusive education model in Abu Dhabi



### Employment Pillar Initiatives

5. Inclusive Employment Policy
6. Inclusive Employment Program



### Social Care Pillar Initiatives

7. Review and align the local classification system of Disabilities with the Unified National Classification of Disabilities in the UAE
8. Targeted community awareness campaign on the rights-based view of disability
9. A comprehensive support scheme for POD families and caregivers
10. Integrated Case Management System
11. Service Officer for POD
12. POD database in Abu Dhabi



### Universal Access Pillar Initiatives

13. Universal access to built environment, transportation services, and housing
14. Universal access to the electronic and smart systems, services, and information
15. Universal access to inclusive sports programs
16. Universal access to inclusive cultural, entertainment, and touristic programs
17. Inclusive air travel experience
18. Inclusive marine travel experience



### Enablers Pillar Initiatives

19. Change management plan
20. Establish an integrated system of care for POD and their families
21. Review of legislative frameworks that affect POD across pillars and sectors
22. POD strategy evaluation and monitoring framework
23. Collaboration with international organizations
24. POD sector governance
25. Planning and development of human capital in all sectors
26. Activation of the role of the third sector to support POD
27. Social protection scheme for POD
28. POD excellence awards
29. Research, development and innovation programs for POD
30. Sustainable funding scheme for POD programs and services

## What We Aim to Achieve



The vision of the emirate is to provide a decent life for every member of the society, and to ensure effective participation of all by enabling people to thrive and achieve their full potential so that no one is left behind.

In this way, everyone is able to contribute to the emirate's sustainable development. POD are an integral part of this society and have a crucial role in the community's growth and development, and the Abu Dhabi strategy for POD comes to empower them and elevate their quality of life and thus contribute to the vision of the emirate as a whole.

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