



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES

## MACROECONOMICS, DIMINISHED HEALTH AND DISABILITY

A briefing was held by a National Catholic Social Justice Organization on the history of the U.S. economy from a social justice perspective. The major presenter, at the forum, was a world renowned social economist from Australia.

**Summary** There have been inequities of distribution of macroeconomic fiscal resources in the U. S. during the last 40 years. The wages of 90% of Americans has remained stagnant while wealthy people have become wealthier. The briefing validated, through scientific research, which the “rich get richer” and the poor get poorer”. Evidence was provided that more than 50% of the people were in poverty in the U.S. at some point from 2000 to 2011. Reasons provide for inequitable redistribution of fiscal resources in the U.S. were greater political power of big business, diminished bargaining power of unions (i.e. 33% of labor force in 1960s to 7% in 2010) and failure of government to level the playing field to balance income distribution based on work and a safety net, and anti government movements in which there was little need for collective action on social and human relationships. There is a view that health, well-bang and pursuit of happiness are all under the control of the individual.

**Disability Prevention Issues** Environments with adverse social conditions for vulnerable families, where there is income insecurity, can diminish health and contribute to disability. Economic conditions contribute to poverty In the U.S., which are major contributors to health disparities and diminished population based health. Although the case was made for stagnation of economic benefits for the majority of the American public, the population based health of vulnerable populations in the U.S. was not a topic for debate. For instance, although the life expectancy of the general population in the U.S. has recently edged up, life expectancy of elderly low income women and other vulnerable people has diminished.

**Activity** There is ongoing a study of the effects of macroeconomics on population based public health

**Principle** There should be adequate economic resources for all to prevent unnecessary diminished health that contributes to disability, morbidity and mortality.