



[International Disability Alliance](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/) and [European Disability Forum](http://edf-feph.org/)’s submission to the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on:

**Half Day of General Discussion on trafficking of women and girls in the context of global migration**

22 February 2018

The International Disability Alliance and the European Disability Forum welcome the fact that the CEDAW Committee has recognised women with disabilities as a group at a higher risk of being trafficked in its Concept Note on the General Recommendation on trafficking of women and girls in the context of global migration.

**According to recent studies and reports, women and girls with disabilities are at a higher risk of exploitation and may be more at risk of trafficking in persons, including in the context of global migration.**

The CRPD Committee has expressed concerns regarding the higher risk of trafficking of women and girls with disabilities.

It noted in particular the lack of data, policies and programmes on protection from and prevention of sexual abuse and trafficking specifically addressing women and girls with disabilities. It referred to specific vulnerable groups such as women and girls with disabilities in institutions, victims of trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation, children with disabilities in institutions, victims of organs trafficking, and Roma persons with disabilities subjected to begging.

Recent reports presented evidence of the **direct link between some forms of disability and different patterns of trafficking**, such as forced begging and labour exploitative practices. Women and girls, with physical or visible disabilities are more likely of being trafficked into forced begging because a visible disability may have a stronger impact on public sympathy. Women and girls with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities are more at risks of sexual exploitation because the traffickers consider them easier to manipulate, as they may not immediately identify themselves as victims, or are less likely to be believed when reporting the abuse.

humanitarian crises and conflict and post-conflict settings generate additional risks of sexual violence and trafficking that affect women and girls with disabilities. For example, the CRPD Committee expressed concerns regarding situations of exploitation and sexual assaults faced by women and girls with disabilities in post-earthquake camps in Haiti.

Several factors lead women and girls with disabilities to be at higher risk of trafficking in persons.

1. **Lack of awareness**
2. **Lack of data**
3. **Structural violations of the rights of women and girls with disabilities**
4. **Invisibility of women and girls with disabilities in international instruments prohibiting trafficking**

Recommendations

we encourage the Committee to address the following issues in its General Recommendation:

1. **Harmonisation of national laws on trafficking in persons** to ensure that the definition of trafficking specifically covers women and girls with disabilities, by inserting specific references to the groups at higher risk such as children, girls and women with disabilities
2. States should systematically desagregate data and statistics in the context of migration by sex, age and disability.
3. **Accessible and inclusive prevention and response measures and programmes**:
4. States should fully ensure the rights of women and girls with disabilities, to avoid placing them at higher risks of trafficking and exploitation.
5. States should ensure that women and girls with disabilities can access justice on an equal basis with others. ensure full accessibility within the justice system and provide training for practitioners, including with the objective to combat stereotypes and myths surrounding gender and disability that may affect their access to justice.
6. States should consider adopting harsher sanctions for traffickers exploiting women and girls because of their disability (aggravating circumstance).