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**BULLETIN**

**The High-level Political Forum and the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SDGs**

**YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE HLPF**

**All meetings will be virtual, which provides a unique opportunity for participation.**

The HLPF will be held from **Tuesday, 7 July to Thursday, 16 July**. The meeting will be available through UN webtv and other social media outlets (information forthcoming). This year everyone is invited to participate in a vibrant online High-level Political Forum (HLPF) and related events that will review the 17 Goals through a COVID-19 lens and seek solutions and actions on how to recover and transform our societies for a better future. At the HLPF, the SGPwD will highlight IDA’s [key recommendations toward a disability-inclusive COVID-19 response](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/covid-19-and-disability-movement).  In addition, we will share research findings from the SGPwD’s  global report on COVID-19 testimonials.

**[INVITATION!] Launch of the report: “The experience of persons with disabilities with COVID-19” - A global report of testimonies -  29th June 9am EDT - The report will be used to support our main advocacy asks for HLPF 2020.  To read more about the report and to register click** [**here**](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_r7Aj1dHvTsqUKA50Oy_Yzw)

A qualitative research study was carried out by the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities in May and June of 2020 to gain information on additional and new pandemic-related barriers that persons with disabilities encounter. The study aimed to complement existing COVID-19 efforts by gathering data from (1) semi-structured interviews with open-ended queries with leaders from the disability movement, (2) empirical data collection from regional focus group webinars to collect testimonials, and (3) empirical data collection and analysis of organizations of persons with disabilities in three countries in Latin America. The data were gathered around thematic units related to the global pandemic. These seven themes included living situation, safety concerns, home life and housing conditions, health care, social protection, employment and COVID-19 disability data. One hundred and six persons with disabilities participated in the research.

1. **HLPF format -** Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and limitations of in-person meetings and international travel, the HLPF as well as other events will be **completely online**. Currently, there has been no decision made about which virtual platform will be used for the main meetings.
2. **HLPF theme and background -** The 2020 HLPF theme is ***"*Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development."** To read more click [here](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/hlpf2020):

The HLPF annual meeting is the core United Nations platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. At this HLPF, participants will debate where we stand on the SDGs in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They will reflect on how the international community can respond to the pandemic in a way that puts us back on track to achieve the SDGs and accelerate progress during the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. Focus will be on two overarching themes: “Launching the decade of action at a time of crisis: Keeping the focus on the SDGs while combatting COVID-19” and “Building back better after COVID-19 and acting where we will have the greatest impact on the SDGs”

1. **Voluntary National Reviews -** Forty-seven countries will report on the progress of SDG implementation and reflect on the global pandemic. All reviews will be held online and live question and answers sessions will follow the presentations. If you wish to engage please send email to [obartha@ida-secretariat.org](mailto:obartha@ida-secretariat.org) To review the countries under review click [here](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/hlpf2020):

The following 47 countries will deliver a presentation: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Comoros, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Gambia, Georgia, Honduras, India, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Micronesia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Slovenia, Solomon Island, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Zambia. For more details, [click here](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2020#vnrs).

After the government presentations, there is usually time alloted for questions and answers. Stakeholders as a group are guaranteed to deliver one statement to these countries. The SGPwD collaborates in the statement drafting and can nominate a limited number of speakers. This provides us with an opportunity to collaborate on country-specific statements and to input into COVID-related advocacy messages.

If you or any DPO partner has a particular interest to participate in collaborative statement drafting or the online delivery of statement, kindly email to Orsolya Bartha at obartha@ida-secretariat.org with the following information:

* Full Name:
* Country of interest (from above list):
* Email address:
* Whatsapp number:

1. **Programme -** The[[2020 HLPF Programme]](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26157HLPF_2020_PROGRAMME.pdf) has been released and the focus of many sessions is on keeping the SDGs relevant while at the same time combatting COVID-19 and building back better. The meetings will start at 9am EST and finish at 5pm.
2. **Accessibility -** The SGPwD sent a formal letter requesting accessibility features similar to previous HLPFs. We called for real-time captioning, International Sign interpretation, additional time for presenters with disabilities, that all materials shared are accessible, and more. Despite several follow-up actions, nothing has been confirmed yet and we will continue to advocate for accessibility.
3. **Official Side Events -** The official SGPwD side event will be on “**Will the SDGs Still be Relevant after the Pandemic for persons with disabilities?**” In addition, SGPwD is co-organizing a side event with the Stakeholder Group on Ageing on **“Learning from COVID-19 to accelerate action for a more inclusive decade of SDG delivery.**” Further information on how to attend the side events is forthcoming. Real-time captioning and International Sign interpretation will be provided for both events.
4. **VNR Labs -** provide an informal platform for experience sharing and reflection on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process. The SGPwD will present in two VNR Labs! Click here to register and to participate in these events.

The SGPwD is engaged in two VNR Labs:

1. “Engaging social groups in the VNR process – A case study of persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples” on Wednesday, 8 July from 12:30 – 2 pm (EDT). To register for the event please provide your information using the following link: <https://bit.ly/vnrlab-ips-pwds-2020>. The deadline to register is **1 July** and you will receive a link for the virtual VNR Lab once your registration has been confirmed. For [more information click here](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2020/06/vnrlab/).
2. “Aligning reporting processes: VNRs and international human rights mechanisms” on Monday, 13 July from 8:00 – 9:00 am (EDT). Click [here to register](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=2zWeD09UYE-9zF6kFubccK90lXsNJA1EtjNhjw6h5nZUQVBYUlpDTlo5RlhNNU1UR0IzRDY2S0RGNS4u) and click [here for more information](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26254Concept_Note_VNR11.pdf).

For information on additional VNR Labs, click [here to sign up and participate](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2020#labs).

**8. Ministerial Declaration -** The HLPF will adopt a Ministerial Declaration as the outcome of its session.The SGPwD is engaged in the negotiations. For the most recent draft, [click here](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26339HLPF_MD_Revised.pdf).

**9. Key Documents for HLPF 2020  - click** [**here**](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/hlpf2020) **to read more about relevant documents.**

(1)[Report of the Secretary General – Progress towards the SDGs](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26158Final_SG_SDG_Progress_Report_14052020.pdf) (Advance unedited version) and (2) The [compilation of the executive summaries of the position papers](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26120MGoS_discussion_paper.pdf) on this year’s HLPF theme “*Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development*” **submitted by the Major Groups and other Stakeholders** are posted. The SGPwD executive summary is included. Once finished, the [full reports](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/inputs/) will be posted on the forum website.

**More information will be released as we receive guidance from the UN Secretariat. For further information please contact: hlpf2020@ida-secretariat.org**