

# **Disability-Inclusive Climate Action: Why and How?**

**Suggested Date and Time:** Wednesday June 16, 8:30am-9:45am

**Organizer:** International Disability Alliance

**Sponsors:** Government of the United Kingdom, Disability Rights Fund (DRF/DRAF), Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), McGill University, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

## **Background**

Although persons with disabilities constitute 15% of the world’s population, actions taken in the field of climate change, including at the multilateral level, have neglected to consider their rights. While the preamble to the 2015 *Paris Agreement* includes persons with disabilities as one of the groups most acutely affected by climate change, they have nevertheless been largely excluded from decision-making processes and outcomes under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as well as from States’ climate change policies and plans at the domestic level.

The failure to include persons with disabilities in the world’s efforts to combat the climate crisis has dramatic consequences. Due to inaccessible preparedness, systemic discrimination, and widespread poverty, people with disabilities are left behind in relief and response efforts. The impacts of climate change – from disasters such as typhoons and wildfires, to more gradual changes such as droughts, temperature increase, and sea level rise – have disproportionate effects on the lives, well-being, and livelihoods of disabled people all over the world. The consequences of climate change are especially severe for under-represented groups of persons with disabilities and those who experience intersecting forms of discrimination, including women, children, Indigenous peoples, and other minority groups; those living in poverty; persons with deafblindness, persons with intellectual disabilities, and persons with psychosocial disabilities.

As the climate change upscaling to a global crisis requiring global response, persons with disabilities must be able to fulfill a meaningful and efficient role in this action to save humanity. But there are many barriers hindering them from becoming active agents for transformation.

## **Objectives**

In recent years, enhancing inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in climate adaptation and climate mitigation policies and processes has attracted increasing attention of persons with disabilities and their organizations, as well as other stakeholders. This event aims to provide an overview of the steps taken so far and future plans in this regard by OPDs, governments, United Nations Agencies, international networks, and the civil society. In particular, the event will pursue the below objectives:

1. Provide an overview on the impact of climate change on persons with disabilities and dearth of disability-inclusive climate adaptation and climate mitigation policies;
2. Discuss the experience of disability movement with climate action, the challenges for participation, and the plans for future engagement;
3. Learning about measures taken by different stakeholders such as the United Nations Framework for Climate Change Convention, the GLAD Network and donor agencies

## **Agenda**

Event facilitator: McGill University

Opening remarks: Representative of the UK government as the host of COP26.

**­Section 1: Impact of Climate Change on Persons with disabilities**

* Contributing the least, experiencing most of the harm: impact of climate change on persons with disabilities, Asha Hans, Founder Director, School of Women's Studies, Utkal University, India.
* Disability, Displacement, and Climate Action: introducing the joint factsheet, Andrew Harper, Special Advisor on Climate Action to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
* Update from the most at-risk region, representative of the Pacific Disability Forum.

**Section 2: Towards enhancing disability inclusion in climate action**

* Measures taken by United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCC representative TBD.
* Steps by Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, representative of the International Disability Alliance.
* Measures of the Global Action on Disability, GLAD ad hoc working group.

**Section 3: Funding disability-inclusive climate projects: some best practices and suggested measures**

* Global Greengrants Fund.
* OPD implementing a project on environmental justice and disability.