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**2023 HLPF Position Paper Executive Summary**

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities recommends the following to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for persons with disabilities, recognizing the important interaction with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected persons with disabilities. Governments and the United Nations system should ensure the rights and participation of persons with disabilities in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. Throughout the road to 2030, progress on accessibility and inclusion must advance.

**Clean Water and Sanitation**

Limited access to drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities and services disproportionately affects persons with disabilities. Governments should invest in and allocate financial resources to make water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities in households and in public settings accessible, prioritizing schools, workplaces, health facilities and communal facilities.

**Accessible information and communications technology and internet access for persons with disabilities**

The main barriers affecting persons with disabilities’ digital access and inclusion are accessibility and affordability of technology products, as well as digital literacy.[[1]](#footnote-1) Governments should ensure that strategies, regulations and initiatives, including COVID-19 recovery plans related to the digital world include persons with disabilities.

**Safe, resilient and sustainable cities**

Barriers to information and communications technologies and cultural attitudes, such as negative stereotyping and stigma, have contributed to the exclusion and marginalization of persons with disabilities in urban communities.[[2]](#footnote-2)Governments should engage persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the design, implementation and monitoring urban programmes, policies and plans including disaster risk reduction and climate action planning. Processes and consultations should be accessible to persons with disabilities with adequate support available where necessary in the form of reasonable accommodation.

**Disability-inclusive responses to climate change**

Climate resilience programmes and disaster risk reduction strategies and policies should make disability a core, cross-cutting theme and must be included in the implementation of the SDGs and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 so that they are both implemented in line with Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities’ Articles 11, 21 and 25.

**Partnerships**

Governments should support multi-stakeholder partnerships working with persons with disabilities, following the human rights model, to increase the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. These should be accessible and inclusive consultations, and support access to funding and opportunities for organizations of persons with disabilities to strengthen their organizations and technical capacities to be able to engage meaningfully.

International cooperation must align its objectives with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Statisticians must start collecting disability data and inform policymakers, who, in collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities and in line with the Convention, must enact new evidence-based regulations and laws to ensure the inclusion and equal participation of persons with disabilities in society.

1. UNHCR, [Digital access and inclusion of people with disabilities](https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Digital-Access-and-Inclusion-of-People-with-Disabilities.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. International Disability Alliance (2021). “Survey on the Experience of Persons with Disabilities Adapting to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic”, available at <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/ida-survey-experiences-persons-disabilities-adapting-covid-19-global-pandemic>; World Blind Union (2020). “Covid-19 report ‘Amplifying voices: our lives, our say”, available at <https://worldblindunion.org/covid-19-amplifying-voices-our-lives-our-say/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)