**SUBMISSION**

**On behalf of the**

**Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities**

**Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable Societies and Persons with Disabilities**

**Executive Summary**

To truly make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, we must ensure that all people are included, diversity is celebrated, and all have support to live and be included in cities and human settlements. Resilience is essential for achieving sustainable development, and to achieve this, the furthest behind must be meaningfully included, such as persons with disabilities. The 2030 Agenda embodies a commitment to include those furthest behind and to reduce their risks to economic, social and environmental shocks. The Sustainable Development Goals can only be realized for persons with disabilities if the implementation is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Globally, persons with disabilities make up 15 percent of the world’s population, 80 percent of whom lives in poverty. Nearly 36 percent of the global population lacks access to sanitation and 884 millionpeople lack access to clean drinking water, which more often affects the poorest communities. Thus, approximately 177 million persons with disabilities are adversely affected and without access to clean water and sanitation.[[1]](#footnote-1) Additionally, more than half of all persons with disabilities lives in towns and cities that are rarely accessible, and this number is estimated to grow to between 750,000 and 1 billion by 2030.[[2]](#footnote-2) Linked to this, the global population of people forcibly displaced reached a record 66 million in 2016, with as many as 10 million being persons with disabilities.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Due to barriers in accessing the built environment, information, and communication, persons with disabilities are denied access to basic urban services, including housing, roads, public spaces, transportation, sanitation and water, health, education, emergency and disaster response. Yet, it is generally feasible to meet accessibility requirements at one percent of the total cost. The reality is that retrofitting for accessibility is more expensive costing up to 20 percent of the original cost compared to integrating accessibility and universal design principles into new buildings.[[4]](#footnote-4) Furthermore, few supports and services exist to enable persons with disabilities and their families to realize their right to live and be included in the community. Where services exist, too often they continue to be segregated, medicalized and based on congregate care. Inclusive societies reflect the interdependence of our rights and that to be fully and meaningfully included, one must also have access to inclusive education, affordable housing, the right to make decisions, employment and other areas.

Inclusive, safe, sustainable and resilient societies cannot be defined only by bricks and mortar and inclusive societies are not defined only by physical access. Inclusive societies must be built on the principles secured in CRPD Article 3 by respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons; non-discrimination; full and effective participation and inclusion in society; respect for differences and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity; equality of opportunity; accessibility; equality between men and women; respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities. To realize this inclusion for persons with disabilities, policy makers must be informed by collecting evidence-based data that are disaggregated by disability using the short set of questions developed by the Washington Group and by properly consulting persons with disabilities and their representative organizations on the design, implementation and monitoring of SDG plans.

1. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG_FS_7_EN.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Utilizing 5 billion urban dwellers, we calculated that 15 to 20% of these would-be persons with disabilities. Data sources used: WHO and World Bank (2011). “World Report on Disability”, and <http://www.unfpa.org/urbanization>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.unhcr.org/5943e8a34.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. WHO and World Bank (2011) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)