



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC
OF KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS



Conference of State Parties to CRPD (COSP11)

Side Event 13 June 10 am – 11:15 am
Conference Room E, UNHQ New York

Leave No-one Behind: The Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Women and Girls with Disabilities in international development and fragile contexts.

Organizers: Permanent Missions of Finland and Kenya to the United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Co-sponsors: IDA, UNFPA, Women Enabled International, Women's Refugee Commission

Panellists: UN Special Rapporteur for the Rights of persons with Disabilities, UNFPA, Women Enabled International, Women's Refugee Commission

Rationale:

The 2030 Agenda's promise to transform the world by leaving no-one behind calls for a specific attention to intersecting aspects of exclusion, discrimination and vulnerabilities in the international development and humanitarian policy and financing frameworks. Sexual and reproductive health and rights are strongly linked to social and economic rights, gender equality and are an inherent part of international development. The targets 3.7 and 5.6 call for universal sexual and reproductive health and rights and related health services, including family planning, information and education for all.

However, taboo, stigma and stereotypes around disability, sexuality and reproduction, restrictive legislation and lack of child- and disability-appropriate information and services create and maintain significant barriers for persons with disabilities accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Forced sterilization, - abortion, and – contraception of girls and women with disabilities are still widely practiced despite the fact that UN human rights mechanism recognises these as human

rights violations. Lack of access to legal aid, lack of physical accessibility to services as well as health-care providers' negative attitudes, including limited knowledge and experience about persons with disabilities are examples of typical barriers that girls and women with disabilities face.

In humanitarian crisis and fragile contexts, these barriers tend to multiply and the risk of facing violence and abuse increases. Also the physical layout and structure of camps and settlements can make it difficult or impossible for persons with disabilities to access not only health services but also shelters and other essential services.

The intersections of young age, disability and gender result in both aggravated forms of discrimination and specific human rights violations against girls and young women with disabilities. Lack of sex, age and disability disaggregated data, statistics and analysis and weak accountability mechanisms also mean that these human rights violations and discrimination remain widely invisible; Typically the SRHR of persons with disabilities have been overlooked by both the disability community and the SRHR organisations, leaving persons with disabilities not only behind but often completely excluded from information, services and human rights.

There is an urgent need to ensure that legal and policy frameworks recognize and protect the SRHR of girls and women with disabilities, and to address the stigma and stereotypes that significantly limit access to [these] rights. Global efforts to prohibit forced and involuntary treatment, including forced sterilization of girls and women with disabilities must be accelerated. There is also a critical need to integrate intersectional analysis and approach to all key development policy frameworks, financing and accountability mechanisms to be better able to identify and address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Objectives

- Identify the most urgent challenges and gaps hampering realization of SRHR for women and girls with disabilities
- Raise awareness about the urgency to strengthen intersectional (especially age, disability and gender) approaches and analysis for addressing multiple forms of discrimination in the international development
- Share practices and identify opportunities for advancing the SRHR for persons with disabilities and to leaving no one behind
- Strengthen multi-stakeholder (states, UN, DPOs and civil society) dialogue, partnerships and networks to promote inclusive SRHR legislation, policies and services

Speakers

Moderator: Victoria Lee, Program Manager, OHCHR

Opening remarks: Ambassador Kai Sauer, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations

Panellists:

- Catalina Devandas, Special Rapporteur for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Hon. Isaac Mwaura, Member of Parliament, Kenya
- Benoit Kalassa, Director, Technical Division, UNFPA
- Stephanie Ortoleva, Esq., Founding President and Executive Director, Women Enabled International
- Emma Pearce, Associate Director, Women's Refugee Commission

Closing remarks:

Josephtha Oyela Mukobe, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Devolution and Planning Kenya