



The International Disability Alliance (IDA) and the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) are sharing this statement on the Global Accessibility Awareness Day, Thursday 21 May 2020

Through the [accessibility campaign](#), we called on United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and several UN agencies to address the lack of accessibility in all UN COVID-19 communications. After weeks of global campaigning from IDA and IDDC members and many other interested individuals and organizations, the UN Secretary-General issued an extensive reply to our call re-affirming the Secretariat's commitment to take all feasible measures to improve accessibility of the UN communication about COVID-19.

In his response, the UN Secretary General recognized that as a global community we face significant challenges. He further recognized that there is an unevenness in the UN approach to disability which he is committed to addressing in a systematic way.

In response to our campaign the UN Secretary General informed us that:

- Eight COVID-19 policy briefs have been produced in an accessible format;
- The policy brief on COVID-19 and persons with disabilities was launched in all accessible formats, including ePub and easy-to-read formats, and a video of the Executive Summary in International Sign.

Our joint campaign also contributed in some considerable progress in realizing accessibility in the World Health Organization COVID-19 communication. The World Health Organisation is taking measures to:

- Ensure their website aligns with the AA level of the Worldwide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1;
- Ensure that the WHO emergencies team works across the organization to develop an accessible PDF format for WHO Situation Reports, which are produced daily and contain the most timely and relevant information about the pandemic;
- Ensure that the WHO press briefings are live captioned, and the transcripts are produced in an accessible format.

This is a great first step in our campaign to make sure that the UN delivers a disability inclusive COVID-19 response.

While we're pleased with the progress made towards a disability-inclusive global COVID-19 response, there is more that needs to be done. Now that steps are being taken to ensure that information is being made available in accessible formats, we must expand our advocacy efforts to address the other forms of discrimination and inequality experienced by persons with disabilities during Covid19. Therefore, the International Disability Alliance and the International Disability and Development Consortium has launched a Covid19 End-Discrimination campaign to raise awareness of examples of the discrimination that persons with disabilities experience in accessing services. This campaign calls on the global community to recognise the critical and urgent need to deliver disability inclusive COVID-19 responses at global, national and local levels. [Learn more about our End-Discrimination campaign in light of the Covid19 pandemic.](#)
