**Title: COVID-19 response in humanitarian settings- how are persons with disabilities included?**

**Date and Time: Tuesday, June 15, 08.30 am -09:45 am EDT**

**Background:**

In humanitarian settings, persons with disabilities face significant barriers to accessing information, goods and services required to protect themselves against COVID-19. With a public health emergency being announced at global, national and local levels, populations already affected by humanitarian emergencies were most impacted by shortages in accessing public health, by school closures, service disruptions and other impacts of COVID-19. These impacts were exacerbated for groups at heightened risk, including persons with disabilities.

The policy brief [A Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID-19](https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Policy-Brief-A-Disability-Inclusive-Response-to-COVID-19.pdf), released in May 2020 by the UN Secretary-General encourages national and local authorities, as well as humanitarian actors to mainstream disability inclusion in all COVID-19 response and recovery actions, together with more targeted actions. In its first year, the Reference Group on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (DRG), in consultation with IASC Results Group 2 on Accountability and Inclusion, developed the [Key Messages on Applying the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action in the COVID-19 Response](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-team-inclusion-persons-disabilities-humanitarian-action/iasc-key-messages-applying-iasc-guidelines-disability-covid-19-response).

**Objectives and Rationale:**

Organized by Reference Group on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, this event aims to elaborate experiences of persons with disabilities in humanitarian settings during COVID-19, exploring how disability intersects with gender, age and displacement status to compound the impacts of the pandemic. The event will also highlight measures taken by different stakeholders to address the impacts of the pandemic, as well as some good practices and lessons learnt. With the COVID-19 recovery as the overarching theme of COSP14 and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies as the first subtheme, this event will be a unique opportunity for persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, humanitarian actors and global decision-makers to exchange on future steps to ensure that persons with disabilities affected by humanitarian emergencies are not left behind in COVID-19 vaccination and recovery. This event will also provide important learning for future public health emergencies.

In particular, the event pursues three main objectives:

1. Provide an overview of the measures taken by humanitarian actors and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to include persons with disabilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in humanitarian contexts;
2. Discuss some of the good practices and challenges to inclusion of persons with disabilities in COVID-19 response in humanitarian settings;
3. Discuss some of the challenges to inclusion of persons with disabilities in COVID-19 vaccination and in recovery phases, and ways to address them

**Agenda:**

Introduction and accessibility tips (5 mins)

Section 1: Global Response (25 mins)

* Overview of recommendations for humanitarian actors to include persons with disabilities in COVID-19 response
* Presentation of actions by UN entities to include persons with disabilities in COVID-19 response in humanitarian contexts
* Presentation on actions by OPDs to include persons with disabilities in COVID-19 response in humanitarian contexts
* Presentation on actions by civil society to include persons with disabilities in COVID-19 response in humanitarian contexts

Section 2: Displaced Persons with Disabilities and COVID-19 (35 mins)

* Opening: Message by a displaced person with disability

Panel discussion:

* Representatives from OPDs, civil society and UN entities to discuss the following:

Question 1: What do we know about impact of COVID-19 on displaced persons with disabilities and measures taken to protect them?

Question 2: What is the perspective on access to COVID vaccination for displaced persons with disabilities? What are the anticipated challenges and measures to address them?

Section 4: Questions from the audience (10 mins)