



Inclusive Health Task Group

HIV, Human Rights and Disability Inclusion

Submission to The Social Forum of the Human Rights Council on Human Rights, HIV and other communicable diseases and epidemics, October 2017

The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) wishes to emphasise the importance of the Disability and HIV reference report published by UNAIDS in August 2017. This document notes a number of key points on human rights in this context. It notes that persons with disabilities have been excluded from all sectors of the HIV response. It states that men and women with disabilities are at approximately double the risk of HIV infection than others, and that in some cases are excluded from HIV services. They are more likely to experience sexual, physical, and emotional violence, and are more economically vulnerable. They face multiple risk factors as well as barriers in accessing services, and are less likely to benefit from sexuality education.

The document notes that:

- Persons with disabilities were left behind in the previous developmental agenda. However, persons with disabilities now feature strongly in the recent 2016 UN Political Declaration on HIV, thanks to the tireless efforts of the IDDC HIV/TB and Health Forum
- Governments must improve data and information to inform disability-inclusive policies
- Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities is key to the development of disability-inclusive programmes
- Disability inclusion requires the prohibition of discrimination based on disability, gender, HIV status, and other areas
- There must be disability-specific targets for allocating funding and to promote accessibility of health, education and related services
- Development partners must ensure that disability inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities is operationalized in all programmes, including HIV, health, rehabilitation, gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Disability is a cross-cutting issue. Everybody holds responsibilities and opportunities to enhance the participation and representation of persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls, in all spheres of life, including

programmatic areas relating to HIV, access to health, education and social protection

In summary, this document emphasises that persons with disabilities are a key focus for human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS/TB. The SDGs emphasize the need to “leave no one behind”, this must include persons with disabilities.

Further, the IDDC notes the following:

- In this context it is noteworthy that HIV/AIDS may itself result in disabilities, including depression, and dementia. As a result, health and rehabilitation services should (a) recognise the additional stigma and exclusion faced by these people, and (b) seek comprehensive services that address disability appropriately.
- Persons with disabilities, among key populations of geographical, social and other forms of disadvantage, must be provided with required support.
- There is a need for action at high levels to address issues of human rights of persons with disabilities.
- There is a pressing need for greater commitment to and accountability for the full inclusion of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable populations.
- We must identify and address inter- and intra-agency gaps, such as the lack of data capturing, which adversely impacts on the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- There is an urgent need to enhance funding / financing systems, support and develop research initiatives, and strengthen management and leadership capacity of agencies which seek to represent and address human rights concerns in the context of disability (international and national, across private, civil society and public sectors).

The IDDC Inclusive Health Task Group is available to formally contribute to discussions or planning on disability and HIV/TB.

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