



International
Disability
Alliance



International Disability
and Development Consortium



One pandemic, different realities: Evidence on the experience of the diversity of persons with disabilities, their representative organisations and civil society organisations in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and preparing to Build Back Inclusively

14th Conference of States Parties to the CRPD

Wednesday 16 June 2021, 8.30-9.45am EDT (New York time)

Registrations: [click here](#)





Introduction and background

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected and promoted by the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). While the COVID-19 pandemic tested our societies in a huge variety of ways, it has shone a clear and harsh light on the realities of discrimination and human rights abuses that people with disabilities experience on a daily basis across the globe. Though there is still a dearth of data on the impact of the pandemic on persons with disabilities, available evidence and testimonies collected, through surveys such as the COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor, indicate that the pandemic has had a devastating impact on the rights of people with disabilities. Everyday barriers such as physical accessibility, barriers to implementing basic hygiene measures, affordability of healthcare, inaccessible health communications, limitations on access to health insurance have had direct negative impacts, and the discriminatory laws and stigma in many countries have proved to be life threatening for many people with disabilities.

While many countries still navigate between lockdown and reopening stages, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing rapid changes on enjoyment of human rights of persons with disabilities remains considerably unclear. Recovery is on everyone's lips and the concept of 'Build Back Better' is trending. However, recovery efforts will only be effective where they are genuinely inclusive and grounded in human rights.

Concluding that there is a need to keep analyzing the situation as the pandemic is likely to stay and profoundly affect all aspects of societies, the International Disability Alliance (IDA), the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) and the Disability Inclusion Helpdesk have conducted three complementary research projects which outcomes:

- IDA collected information and evidence on the experience of persons with disabilities adapting with new normal as well as second or even third waves of the pandemic causing rapid changes in the social restrictions, with particular attention to underrepresented groups of persons with disabilities. It will also aim to address gaps identified from the mapping of existing disability and COVID-19 surveys conducted so far, looking particularly at groups and regions not covered. Supported by the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of people with disabilities (UNPRPD), the information collected is meant to inform and support relevant prioritisation of efforts including policies and plans of governments, inter-governmental global and regional organizations including the UN agencies, as well as the civil society organizations including organizations of persons with disabilities in transition and recovery phases.
- In its report "Adjust and Respond", IDDC focused on analysing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related emergency measures on civil society organisations, with a particular focus on projects and programmes and the continuation of service provision for people with disabilities run by IDDC members and its partners in the Global South. Also supported by the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of people with disabilities (UNPRPD) through its global programme on COVID-19 inclusive response and recovery, IDDC's report records IDDC members' experiences of how they adapted and are still adapting to challenges posed by the pandemic.





- The Disability Inclusion Helpdesk, an FCDO (UK Government) funded facility, supported by IDA and Sightsavers has undertaken a qualitative research to develop a knowledge product on the impact of the COVID19 pandemic on organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), with a particular focus on organisations of women with disabilities and those of under-represented groups in Bangladesh, Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

Objectives

The side-event aims at providing guidelines based on the lessons learned from COVID-19 to local, national and international stakeholders to support their recovery and build sustainable resilience to any future shocks. Building on the reports' recommendations and guidelines, the side-event will also provide the opportunity to reflect on how persons with disabilities will access the vaccinations and how to ensure participation of OPDs as essential actors to 'rebuild' more inclusively.

Speakers

Opening remarks

- Claire Moran, Head of Global Funds Department (Global Health and COVID-19 Directorate), FCDO
- Dr. Ola Abu Alghaib, Director/Manager, Technical Secretariat UNPRPD MPTF

Panelists

- Martine Abel-Williamson, World Blind Union
- Lorraine Wapling, Senior Technical Expert, SDDirect
- Rejaul Karim Siddiquee, OPD Engagement Officer for Bangladesh, IDA
- Dr. Amita Bhakta, Consultant, IDDC
- Dominic Haslam, Chair, IDDC

Moderation by Dr. Antony Duttine, Regional Adviser Disability and Rehabilitation, PAHO/WHO

Closing remarks

- Priscille Geiser, Programme Director, IDA

Practical information

Registration link: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYtceqtpjgsEtwfSboqWUon7nsv0POI3hyZ>

Closed captioning in English and International Sign Interpretation will be provided.

