

## 14th session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD

15-17 June 2021, New York

Over 1 billion persons with disabilities have great potential and the ability to contribute to all aspects of development and society. Yet they have been in more marginalized situations due to historical discriminations and many forms of barriers that prevent their inclusion and participation equally and fully as members of our communities. In facing the current COVID-19 crises, evidence showed already that persons with disabilities are at greater risk and disproportionately affected by the COVID-19.

The themes of the Conference were as follows:

- **Overarching theme:** Building back better: COVID-19 response and recovery; Meeting the needs, Realizing the rights and Addressing the socio-economic impacts on persons with disabilities.
- **Sub-theme 1:** Protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies.
- **Sub-theme 3:** Right to education, challenges with inclusive education and accessibility during COVID-19.

5 things you should know about persons with disabilities.

**Roughly 15% of the world's population, around 1 billion people, live with a disability.** It can be a physical, developmental, emotional or a sensory impairment. Each condition requires its own special attention to fulfill the needs of the individual.

**1. Independence is key:**

People who live with a disability should be able to make his or her own choices, enjoying the same freedoms and services as the rest of society. Failure to acknowledge everyone's needs prevents them from fully enjoying their human rights and freedoms. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted to protect these rights.

**2. COVID-19 has strongly impacted persons with disabilities:**

Persons who live with a disability are at greater risk of contracting COVID-19. Many cannot afford or are denied healthcare. Persons with intellectual disabilities are also disproportionately affected by the socio-economic consequences of the health crisis. As the pandemic has disrupted many services, it is necessary to implement structural reforms.

**3. Women with disabilities are at higher risk of discrimination.**

According to UN Women, **1 in 5 women live with a disability.** They are more easily subject to discrimination and sexual violence, especially if they live with intersecting identities. All efforts for persons with disabilities must include a gender perspective to protect those at a higher risk of discrimination.

**4. Many countries lack funding and training to integrate technological advances.**

Information and communications technologies contribute to the education of persons with disabilities. Accessible technology also allows for full participation in society, subsequently diminishing stereotypes on disabilities. Countries need more targeted policy and funds to support the right to education of persons with disabilities.

**5. Persons with disabilities face restrictions in healthcare**

Disability is often overlooked in the public health department. The lack of research and action, combined with lower incomes, often lead to difficulties for persons with disabilities in securing quality healthcare.

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