



**Convention on the Rights  
of Persons with Disabilities**

## Roundtable 1

# Innovation and Technology Advancing Disability Rights

## Easy Read



# About COSP15, Conference of State Parties to the CRPD



The United Nations wrote a document to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are protected.

This document is called: **The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**.

This document is also called the Convention.

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Countries who signed the CRPD need to report to the United Nations.

Countries have to explain to the United Nations how they protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

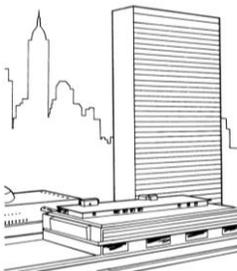
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At the **Conference of State Parties**, people representing their countries come together to talk about how they protect the rights of persons with disabilities in their country.

People also call the conference: **COSP**

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This Conference happens every year at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City.

In 2022, it is the **15th session of COSP (COSP15)**.

## About This Document



**Different United Nations offices and representatives from civil society wrote this document together.**

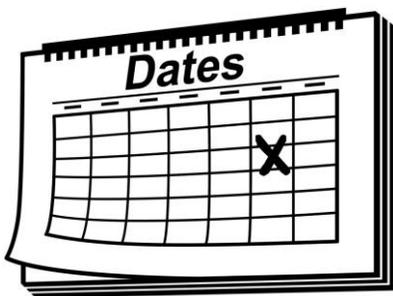
**Civil society** are people or organizations that are not part of the United Nations or a government. Civil society can be an individual advocate or an organization.



This document gives information about the topic **"Innovation and technology advancing disability rights."**



**This document will be used to have a conversation during a round-table discussion at the COSP15 Conference.** It is called a round-table discussion because everyone at the meeting will be able to participate.



The round-table discussion is held on:

**Wednesday, 15 June 2022, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm  
United Nations Headquarters in New York,  
Conference Room 4**

People can also watch the meeting on the internet.

This is the link to the website: [media.un.org](https://media.un.org)

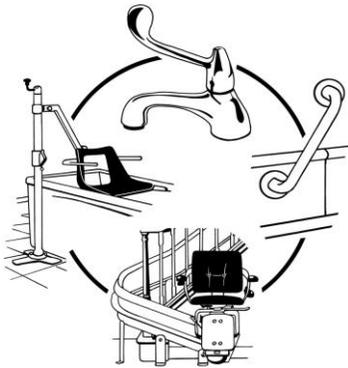
# Introduction



The United Nations (UN) and the international community want to "**build back better**" after the **coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19)**. This means we want to make the world better than it was before the pandemic.



**Technology** in this document means: anything that helps people to do things more easily and makes our lives better.



This document talks about **assistive technologies**, which are products made to be used by persons with disabilities to make their lives better and allow them to be part of their community.



The document also talks about **mainstream technologies**, which are technologies for everyone that are also important for persons with disabilities.

## International Framework



The **Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** is a group of people who make sure countries protect the rights of persons with disabilities by following the CRPD.



The committee says that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) helps persons with disabilities participate in society. When people have access to ICT like the internet, they go to school, find jobs, or meet new people more easily.



The United Nations works towards the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, also called the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. They will make the world safer and better for everyone.



The motto of the SDGs is: "**Leave no one behind**"

This means the SDGs want to make the life better for everybody. To do so they must pay special attention to people who are treated unfairly, like persons with disabilities.

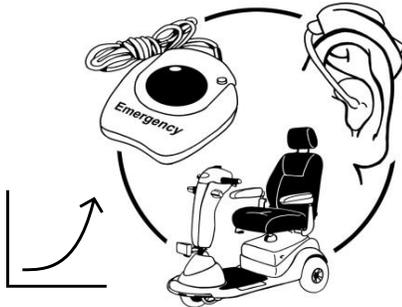
## **Current Situation and Challenges**

This part talks about how persons with disabilities use technology. It talks about the difficulties people have with technology. It also talks about what can be done to overcome problems with technology.

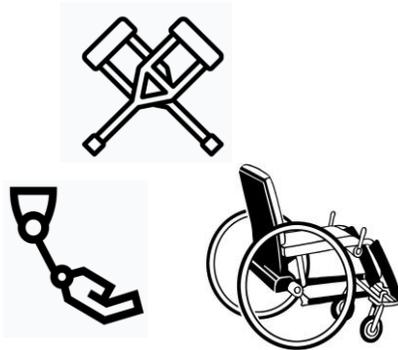
# Current Situation and Challenges



New technologies are being made to better the lives of people and change the way we learn, live, work, and play.

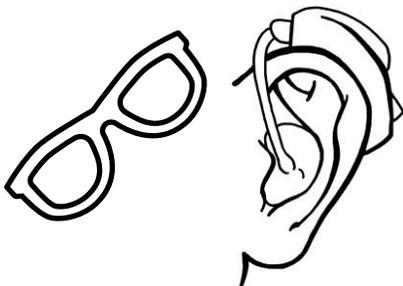


Research found that **one billion people need assistive technologies**. Because people are getting older, this number will likely double over the next 10 years.



There are **40,000 types of assistive technologies**.

For people with difficulty moving around, examples of assistive technologies are wheelchairs, crutches, and prostheses.



**There are many assistive devices for people with sensory disabilities.** For people with difficulty seeing there are talking books, glasses, and screen readers. For people hard of hearing, examples are hearing aids or implants.

## Current Situation and Challenges



There are **assistive technologies for people with difficulty speaking**, like communication boards and picture symbols. These also help people with learning difficulties.

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Technologies such as video communication, video sign language interpretation, and subtitles on television are helpful.

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Remote controls allow people with difficulties moving to do things, both at home and in the workplace. These examples show how useful technology can be for independence,.

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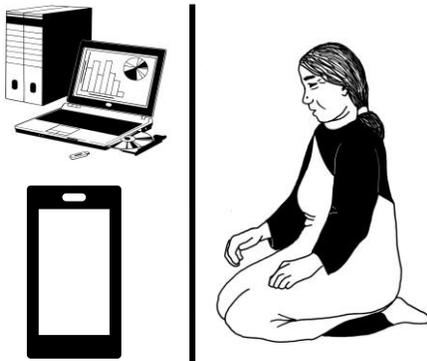
Research shows that assistive technologies allow people to be more independent. They allow people to participate in education, work, and social life. This reduces the cost for support services and helps their families who care for them.

# Current Situation and Challenges



Globally, there are many people who do not have the assistive technology they need:

- About 200 million people need technology for low vision
- 75 million people need a wheelchair
- Over 400 million people need hearing aids



There is a **digital divide**. The digital divide is when some people cannot access or use new technologies. persons with disabilities, especially women and girls, have problems getting new technologies.



Research shows that persons with disabilities living in rural communities and those living in difficult situations face barriers to basic technologies. These are electricity, internet, computers, and mobile phone service.



Common technology like televisions, phones, and the internet are often not accessible to persons with disabilities.

## Current Situation and Challenges



The gap in accessing technologies makes it more difficult for persons with disabilities to go to school, find work, get health care, and participate in social activities, and vote.

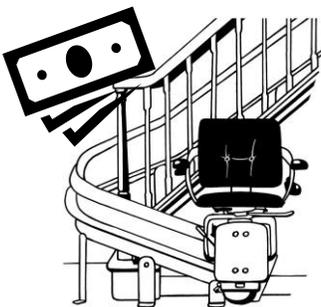


Technology develops fast with many new technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics, computing, additive printing, and more.

They can allow persons with disabilities to have better lives.

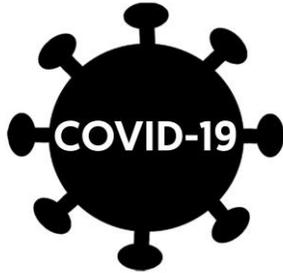


Assistive technologies need to catch up with new technologies. This fast-changing technology is a great opportunity to support disability rights.



The CRPD says persons with disabilities have the right to technologies being made available to them and that assistive technology should not be expensive.

# Current Situation and Challenges



The COVID-19 pandemic changed how we use technology.

Online work, school, medical visits, shopping, and government services are used more.



While many people were able to study and work at home, many persons with disabilities couldn't use the technologies.



Only 1 in 5 parents of children with disabilities said that radio and television learning was helping their children with disabilities to learn.

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## **The Way Forward for Disability Rights in Innovation and Technology**

This part talks about how we can make new ideas and technologies inclusive of persons with disabilities.

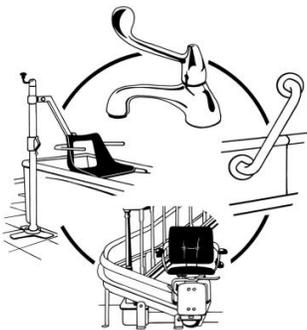
# The Way Forward



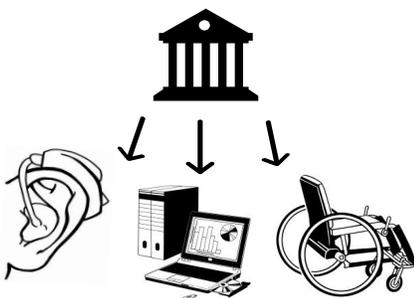
Governments should make laws and policies that make sure technologies are made accessible to persons with disabilities. Governments also need to make sure everyone follows these laws.



Every country should have a national innovation strategy. These are directions that ensure technologies are built for everyone, including persons with disabilities.



Governments can create a list of important assistive technologies that help those with disabilities the most and support the production of these items.



Governments need to ensure assistive technologies are available to all persons with disabilities in their countries. Assistive technologies should be available for free to those who need them.

# The Way Forward



Governments should educate businesses, funders and people in government about the need for assistive technologies.

This is called awareness-raising.



We need to work together to make technology more available for those with disabilities in low- and medium-income countries – these are countries that have little money and services available.



Countries need to cooperate to improve the rights of persons with disabilities.

Article 32 of the CRPD calls for governments to promote international cooperation to make assistive technologies available to everyone.



It is important to build partnerships. Governments, businesses, researchers, and funders need to work together.

It is also important to work with the people using assistive technologies. These are persons with disabilities, their families, and support persons.

## Questions for Discussion

These questions will help to start the conversation at the round table discussion.

## Questions for Discussion



What are obstacles that prevent persons with disabilities from using technology?



Which public policies are making new technologies accessible and affordable for persons with disabilities?



Persons with disabilities living in rural communities face bigger barriers to technology. How can we support them?



How can we make sure that persons with disabilities everywhere have information about available assistive technologies?

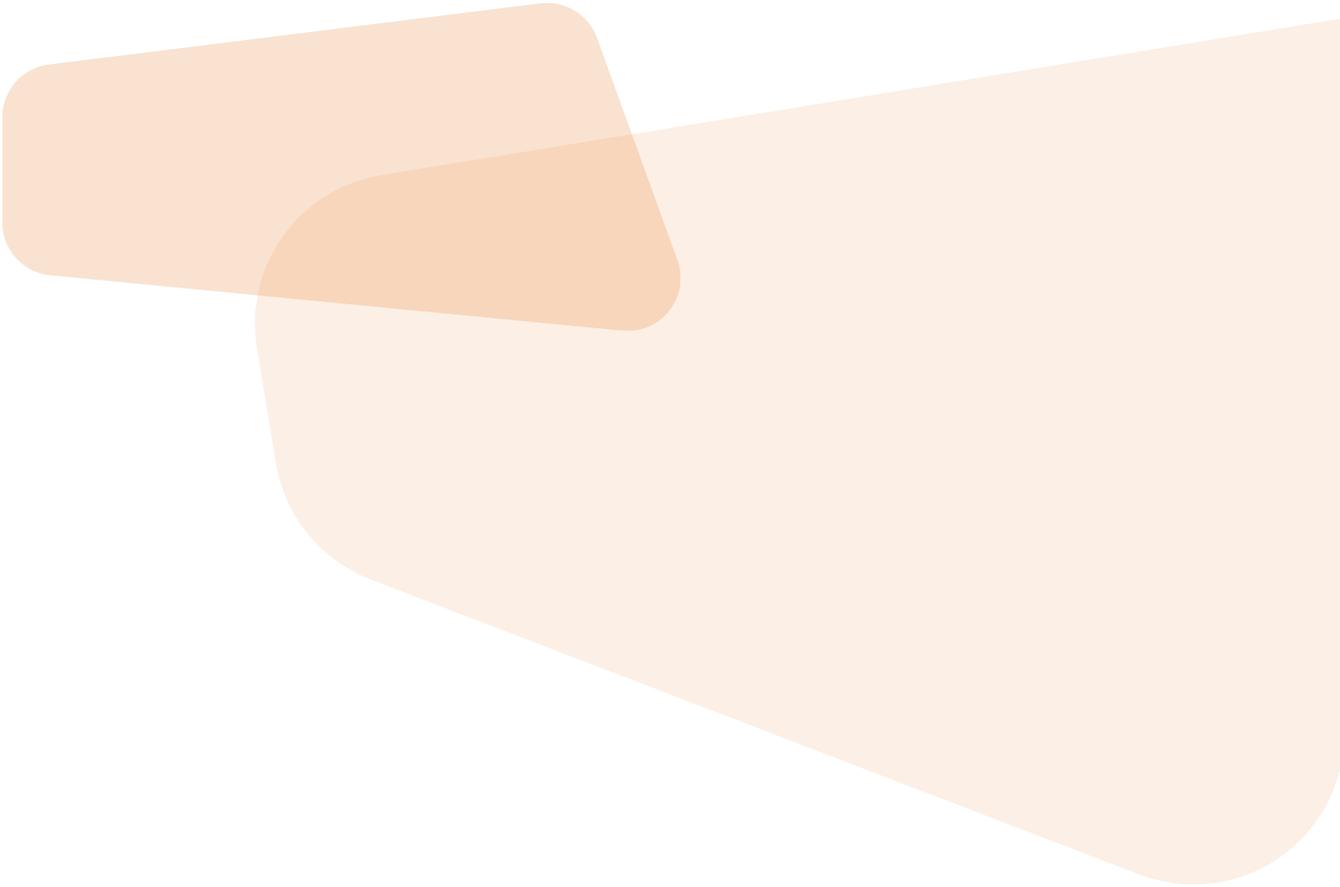
## Questions for Discussion



What are examples of including persons with disabilities in the making of new assistive technologies?



How can partnerships make technologies available to everyone with disabilities?



This Easy Read translation was developed by:



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