

**Side Event organized by the SCRPD/DSPD in conjunction with the 54th session
of the Commission for Social Development**

Draft Concept Note

**“Addressing the structural issues concerning inequalities faced by persons with
disabilities in
society and development”**

5 February, 1.15 – 2.30, conference room 7

1. Background

In September 2015, Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The new Agenda continues to place the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions at the centre of global development, while giving greater emphasis on an integrated approach to sustainable development and pledging to leave no one behind. It forms the new context in which social development will be promoted, namely as an integral component in the implementation of the commitments to achieve the sustainable development goals.

Against this background, the Bureau of the Commission decided on **“Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world”** as the priority theme of the 54th Commission session. The selection of this topic is in line with the 2030 Agenda which promises to leave no one behind. Indeed, strengthening of social development is crucial for the integration and inclusion of all persons in society.

One of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), goal 10, specifically addresses inequality and within that goal SDG target 10.2 calls for empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of disability. Inequality in socio-economic outcomes and in political inclusion of persons with disabilities can be highly influenced by inequalities in opportunities. Opportunities for persons with disabilities tend to be reduced as they face discrimination and stigma, they encounter constant barriers in a non-accessible environment, and they experience additional costs of living due to disability (health care, transportation, personal assistance or assistive devices, modified residences, etc.). These inequalities in turn lead to higher rates of poverty among people with disabilities, compared to the general population. Case studies in developing countries show that higher disability rates are associated with higher rates of poverty, illiteracy, poor nutritional status, higher rates of unemployment and underemployment.

A panel discussion on addressing inequalities experienced by persons with disabilities, will be organized by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to address structural issues which feed into the inequalities faced by persons with disabilities.

2. Objectives

In the context of addressing inequalities as a priority issue in the 2030 Agenda, the panel discussion will provide a forum for exchange of ideas that are strategically important for the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society and development.

Specifically, the panel aims at:

- 1) Identifying areas/interlinkages that require greater policy coherence for the reduction of inequalities experienced by persons with disabilities;
- 2) Exchanging knowledge, from the social perspective, on innovative approaches and strategies, good practices and lessons in addressing inequality that were learned at the national, regional and international levels
- 3) Discussing how to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda (which promises to leave no one behind), paying particular attention to the most marginalized/vulnerable.

3. Composition of the Panel

The panel will consist of five panelists and one moderator. Panelists will be invited among Governments, academia, and representatives of civil society, especially disabled persons' organizations.

4. Guiding questions

The panel discussion may wish to consider the following questions:

1. What are the major structural causes contributing to inequality faced by persons with disabilities?
2. What are the examples of good practices in addressing the inequalities against persons with disabilities? Have the inter-sectionality of gender, race, disability and cultural background been addressed?
3. How can inequalities be overcome in light of the 2030 Agenda?
4. What are the existing discrepancies to collecting disability-disaggregated data and statistics? In what way can these discrepancies be addressed?

5. Time allocation

Speaker	Suggested speaking time
Moderator: Opening remarks, introduction and context-setting	5 minutes
Panelists: Presentations	5 - 10 minutes per panelist
Moderated interactive discussion	Interventions limited to 3 minutes, followed by responses from panelists.
Concluding remarks by moderator	5 minutes

6. Resources

- Final discussion summary of the "**Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities - Persons with Disabilities**" from the consultative process toward a post-2015 development framework (2013)
<http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/307833>
- Event Summary of **Civil Society Engagement and Citizen's Participation in the Sustainable Development Era** (26 June 2015, New York)

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7904Civil%20Society%20Engagement%20&%20Participation%20in%20a%20SD%20Era.pdf>

- Speech of Mosharraf Hossain, Director of Policy Influencing, ADD International during the UN Sustainable Development Summit 2015 (25-27 September)
<http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/disalliance.e-presentaciones.net/files/public/files/UN%20SDG%20Summit%20-%20Speech%20of%20Mosharraf%20Hossein.docx>
- Resources on women and girls with disabilities (compiled by SCRPD)
http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/resources_women_disabilities_english.doc
- Harry G. Frankfurt: *On Inequality*, Princeton University Press (September 2015)
- *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 95, issue 1, Jan-Feb. 2016 (special issue on inequality and available at Dag Hammarskjöld Library - Electronic Journals)