

International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC)

Website: <https://www.iddcconsortium.net>

Elizabeth Lockwood, IDDC United Nations Task Group Co-Chair,
elizabeth.lockwood@cbm-global.org

Chapeau

Human rights of those furthest left behind, including persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, must be core and centre of the Pact of the Future and needs to reflect human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as well as leave no one behind principles. Persons with disabilities need to be mentioned explicitly as well as aspects of intersectionality considered throughout the Pact of the Future.

We call on Member States to:

- Recognise that the full realisation of the right to education for all is an essential condition for achieving sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Reaffirm that health is a precondition for and an outcome and indicator of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and continues to inspire our action and enhance our efforts, to achieve universal health coverage, by 2030, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.
- Ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in data design, collection, management, and use. Data must reflect the reality of persons with disabilities and be harmonized to create effective evidence-based policies and programs.
- Have pre-conditions systematically in place, such as accessibility for all persons with disabilities and recognition that organisations of persons with disabilities must be the driving and leading force to make change. This is for both disability-focused programmes and policies, and mainstream ones.

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

Today's limited resources must be used more strategically and efficiently and investments should focus on system strengthening. Member States must prioritise interventions that promote the rights of the most marginalised, such as building and strengthening inclusive social protection systems and promoting community support services and systems. Additionally, investing in transforming education will drive the realisation of the SDGs.

Marginalised groups and their communities must be involved across all action areas to strengthen individuals, societies and economies and make them more resilient.

Investing in the realisation of human rights and the availability of inclusive services for persons with disabilities and those most marginalised is not only an obligation, but also smart and will have disproportionate returns on investments. Ensuring that interventions promote comprehensive accessibility, using universal design principles, e.g., in the areas of health, work, communication, information, or transport, will spark creativity and innovation that ultimately benefit all.

The right to independent living in the community is insufficiently financed in development cooperation. In low and middle-income countries, community-based services and support remain underfinanced and underdeveloped, which translates into a lack of autonomy and agency, and can be a driver of segregation and institutionalization in some contexts. Donors must follow the “do no harm” principle by ensuring that their investments do not fund institutions and other segregated settings, as defined in the CRPD Guidelines on deinstitutionalisation, including in emergencies. Instead, investments should fund community-based services and direct support, such as personal assistance and assistive technology, and ensure the accessibility of mainstream services such as health, education and employment for all persons with disabilities.

We call on Member States to:

- Reaffirm their commitments from the “the Incheon Declaration: Education 2030 – towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all, adopted at the World Education Forum 2015, which aims to mobilize all countries and partners and provide guidance on achieving the effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 and meeting the related targets on education for all, including for women and girls, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, stateless and internally displaced persons, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.
- Recognise the “significant importance of investment in public education, and doing so to the maximum of available resources” and commit to “Increasing and improving domestic and external financing for education, including in sanitary and humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations” (A/HRC/RES/47/6, 2021, para 5, b and c).
- Renew their calls upon States to “to take all measures necessary, including by making education a priority in their national budgets by granting sufficient budgetary allocations to education, to ensure accessible, inclusive, equitable and non-discriminatory quality education to all at all levels, and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, paying particular attention to women and girls, children in the most vulnerable and marginalized situations, older persons, persons with disabilities, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and all persons in vulnerable and marginalized situations, including those affected by humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations” (Resolution A/HRC/RES/47/6, 2021, para 7).
- Encourage “States to allocate appropriate financial and technical resources in support of country-led national education plans, and an increase in voluntary contributions to the Global Partnership for Education” (Resolution A/HRC/RES/47/5, 2021).
- Strengthen national efforts, international cooperation and global solidarity at the highest political level and pursue policies towards adequate, sustainable,

effective and efficient health financing and investments to strengthen quality, people-centred, sustainable and resilient health systems and to accelerate the achievement of universal health coverage by 2030 (PD of the HLM on UHC, 2023, paras 46, 53, 84, 89).

- Respond to unmet health needs and eliminate financial barriers to access to quality, safe, effective, affordable and essential health services, medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and other health technologies, reduce out-of-pocket expenditures which lead to financial hardship and ensure financial risk protection for all throughout the life course, especially for those in vulnerable situations, and comprehensively address social, economic, environmental and other determinants of health by working across all sectors through health-in-all-policies and whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches (PD of the HLM on UHC, 2023, paras. 47 and 83).
- Ensure universal access to nationally determined sets of integrated quality health services at all levels of care, respect and promote the principles of equality and non-discrimination in health, implement the most effective, high-impact, quality-assured, people-centred, gender-, race-, and age-responsive and disability-inclusive, and evidence-based interventions to meet the health needs of all throughout the life course, and empower those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations, including women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, and older persons and those living in poverty and extreme poverty to ensure that no one is left behind in universal health coverage, with an endeavour to reach the furthest behind first (PD of the HLM on UHC, 2023, paras 47, 48 & 51).
- Strengthen planning for rehabilitation, including its integration into national health plans and policies, and to incorporate appropriate ways to strengthen financing mechanisms for rehabilitation services and the provision of technical assistance, including by incorporating rehabilitation into packages of essential care where necessary (Resolution WHA 76.6).

Chapter II. International peace and security

The world is facing a situation of growing political instability and an increased number of conflicts and climate induced disasters. Stakeholders must acknowledge the disproportionate risk that persons with disabilities face in situations of disasters, conflict, and displacement. In crises and conflicts, persons with disabilities, are often particularly marginalised and face additional risks. Persons with disabilities and their representative organisations must have a leading role in discussions and peace negotiations and meaningfully and continually contribute to solutions that take their needs into account.

As flagged by Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, quality education is an essential ingredient in promoting, building and sustaining peace and this should be recognised in the Pact for the Future. Education has a key role helping to prevent violence and promoting peaceful societies by teaching learners respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as for human diversity. It also teaches respect for institutions and can help promote transparency and accountability, as well as and skills to resolve conflicts

Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation

The lack of data and evidence on the situation of persons with disabilities constitutes a significant barrier to creating an inclusive and equitable world. To achieve the inclusion of persons with disabilities and leave no one behind, it is vital to collect, use, analyse and disaggregate data by disability to inform evidence-based policies and programs. Furthermore, it is essential to recognise citizen-generated data as a methodology to complement official statistics to fill data gaps of the most marginalised groups, including persons with disabilities.

The growing digital divide that disproportionately affects persons with disabilities must be addressed. In fact, approximately 80 percent of all persons with disabilities live in the global south and around 90 percent lack sufficient access to assistive technologies. One way to address this is for governments to adopt international standards on digital accessibility and inclusion. Additionally, research must be conducted with the active participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations. Digital innovations have the potential to greatly improve the living conditions of people in vulnerable contexts and need to be accessible to all persons with disabilities. Member States need to ensure the availability and affordability of assistive technologies. Applying for social protection benefits and accessing them should be solved digitally and accessibly and without barriers.

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

Young persons with disabilities are diverse, as disability intersects with their gender, ethnicity, migrant status, being LGBTQ+ and other areas. Intersectional discrimination can further limit opportunities for education, employment, leisure and political participation. But diversity is also valuable. Ensuring that young persons with disabilities, in all their diversity, are part of political processes, and can thrive in society, can open the doors for many other marginalised communities to experience the same success.

Youth participation, particularly of young men and women with disabilities, is crucial in all processes to ensure that young people have a say in decisions that affect the foundations of their future. One of the most important investments in future generations is transformative education. Additionally, climate protection and adaptive disaster prevention measures must be given top priority to protect future generations. Disaster risk reduction must be inclusive and address specific risks related to persons with disabilities and their representative organisations. All measures must ensure the safety and protection of persons with disabilities, based on their recommendations.

UNICEF's latest Sustainable Development Goal report reveals that around two thirds of the SDGs concerning children's rights and well-being are falling behind in their progress toward achieving their targets. If recent progress continues, only one in 6 countries will meet SDG4 and deliver universal access to quality, inclusive education for all by 2030. Yet SDG 4 is a core pillar of Agenda 2030 and key to unlocking all the other Goals. Inclusive education is essential to provide opportunities and allow everyone in future generations to develop to their full potential. Education has a role

as an equaliser for future generations and the potential to break the cycle of intergenerational transmission of inequality.

Chapter V. Transforming global governance

Development cooperation projects are not sufficiently involving persons with disabilities and their representative organisations as equal partners in projects that affect them. When they are consulted, this is done sporadically, but they do not have meaningful roles and cannot effectively make decisions. Lack of access to education of persons with disabilities in low and middle-income countries further exacerbates this issue. Consultations of relevant policies also fail to meaningfully engage persons with disabilities and their representative organisations. In addition, youth engagement is a vital part to transform the global governance therefore consultation and participation of youth.

There must be full involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, as defined in [General Comment n°7](#), in the planning, implementation and evaluation of relevant projects. Capacity building is key to address inequalities and power imbalances, while ensuring that all processes are accessible to all persons with disabilities. To leave no one behind, processes within the United Nations must be simplified and structures, formats, information, and events online and in person must be accessible to all persons with disabilities. Easy-to-read language, International Sign, national sign languages, Braille, and other alternate formats must be provided.