

Disability-Inclusive Peacebuilding

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Importance of disability-inclusive peacebuilding

Peacebuilding (peace processes and peacebuilding programs) needs to benefit from the expertise of people with disabilities.

- Organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) have catalyzed peace processes and led peacebuilding programs in some instances
- Post-conflict phase is opportunity for gains in disability rights

People with disabilities are disproportionately harmed by conflict.

- More likely to experience violence
- Impacted by breakdown in services
- Difficulty evacuating and inaccessible refugee camps
- Poorly served by judicial proceedings

Gap #1: Exclusion is the norm

- Most peacebuilding programs and peace processes do not make efforts to include people with disabilities
- When inclusion does happen, it is often superficial or at the last minute
- When included, people with disabilities are beneficiaries in programs – not trainers or experts
- Rarely treated as full partners or paid for their expertise
- Research shows that persons with disabilities are mentioned in only 6.6% of peace agreements from 1990-2019. (Reference: [*Peace Agreements and Persons with Disabilities*](#), Sean Molloy, p. 27)
 - No research on the experience of people with disabilities in peace processes

Gap #2: Inclusion is uneven

- Exclusion is the norm. When inclusion does happen, it is uneven.
 - *Intersecting identities.* Women, indigenous, and LGBTQI individuals with disabilities are less likely to be included.
 - *Origin of disability.* Peacebuilding more often includes people with disabilities resulting from conflict (veteran or civilian) than people with disabilities from before conflict
 - In some contexts, though, people with disabilities from war are treated with suspicion.
 - *Type of disability.* People with multiple disabilities, intellectual disability, or psychosocial disability are less likely to be included.

Gap #3: Exclusionary hiring practices

- Peacebuilding organizations and governments themselves are often not inclusive
- People with disabilities should be represented at all levels of organizations and on all themes
- Staff members with disabilities should take a leading role in disability inclusive peacebuilding

Gap #4: Lack of data

- Stronger data – at the scoping, planning, and implementation phases – can improve inclusion of people with disabilities
- Data must be collected in a way that does no further harm and specifically avoids stigma
- Washington Group Questions are a useful tool

Recommendations

Within UN, focus on implementation of UNSCR 2475

- Include a focus on disability in new peacekeeping mandates and mandate renewals
- Require regular consultations with OPDs in country
- Capacity building for UN Panels of Experts

Meaningful partnerships with OPDs – OPDs are included and compensated at every stage of program. They co-design and co-lead.

Recommendations (continued)

Plan for accessibility – Consider physical space, transportation, hotels, means of communication, assistive devices, different ways of learning.

Develop opportunities – in collaboration with OPDs – for OPDs and persons with disabilities to build skills in peacebuilding

Offer more flexible funding mechanisms for OPDs

More research