



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

Roundtable 3

**Participation of Persons
with Disabilities in
Climate Action,
Disaster Risk Reduction and
Resilience Against Natural Disasters**

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.



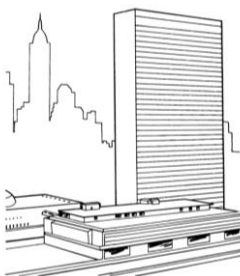
Countries who signed the CRPD need to report to the United Nations.

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



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**



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

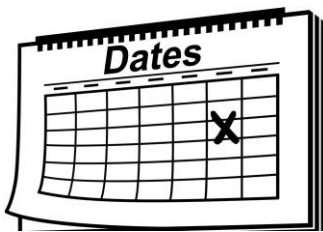


Different United Nations offices and representatives from civil society wrote this document together.

Civil Society means 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 will be used to have a conversation during a roundtable discussion at the COSP15 Conference. It is called a roundtable discussion, because everyone at the meeting will be able to participate.



The roundtable discussion is held on **Thursday, 16 June 2022, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the United Nations Headquarter 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

About this Document



This document gives information about the topic:

"Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Climate Action, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Resilience Against Natural Disasters."



In this meeting people will talk about **persons with disabilities taking climate action**. Climate is the temperature and weather on earth. The way we live is changing the climate and we need to take action to make it better.



People will also talk about how to **reduce the risk of disasters**. Disasters are emergencies that hurt many people in one place. Reducing the risk means to prepare and be able to help when disasters happen.



People will also talk about how we can **be prepared for natural disasters**. Natural disasters are events that happen in nature that are dangerous for people. Examples of natural disasters are floods, storms, earthquakes, or volcanic eruptions.

Introduction



Because persons with disabilities are not included in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies they are in great danger during disasters.



Disasters also cause disabilities, because people get hurt. Disability-inclusive disaster response is important for everyone.



All countries must make sure that their climate actions protect the human rights of all people. They should include plans for persons with disabilities in all climate laws, policies and programs.



Persons with disabilities and their representative organizations have an important role in helping the global crisis of climate change.

International Framework



The Convention guides us when including persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in preparing, responding to, and recovering from climate events and other natural disasters.



Article 11 of the Convention says that countries must protect persons with disabilities during dangerous situations like natural disasters and climate events.



The **2030 Agenda** and **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** are goals of the United Nations. They promise that no one will be left behind. They have goals to support persons with disabilities in disasters.



Goal 1 aims to end poverty by improving resilience of the poor in dangerous situation, natural disasters, and climate events.

International Framework



The **Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action** asks countries to make all assistance available to persons with disabilities.



UN World Conference on
Disaster Risk Reduction
2015 Sendai, Japan

The **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030** is a document that develops a plan to lower the risks for people in disasters. It says that all efforts should be accessible to persons with disabilities.



The **SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway** is a document listing problems of small island countries. Small islands are very much affected by climate change. The document says, it is important to include persons with disabilities especially when planning for emergencies like evacuation procedures.

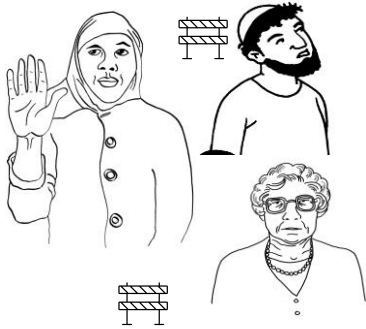


United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, called the Paris Agreement, was made to create policies to limit global warming. It says that all countries should respect and promote all human rights, including the rights of persons with disabilities when taking action against climate change.

Key Issues

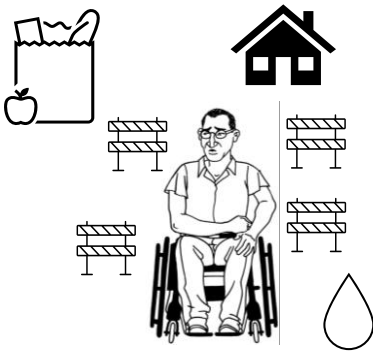
This part talks about problems persons with disabilities face in climate change and natural disasters.

Key Issues

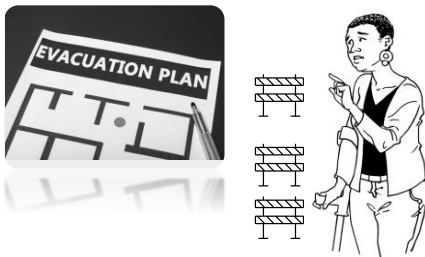


Persons with disabilities are more affected by climate change than persons without disabilities.

Being a woman or an older person, ethnicity, or religion can make the effect of climate change for persons with disabilities even worse.



These reasons can worsen health, access to food, housing, water and sanitation, and moving around even more challenging during disasters and climate change.



Countries have made many disaster risk reduction plans, but a lot of them do not think about the needs of persons with disabilities.



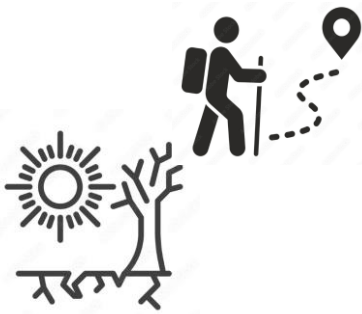
The **United Nations Office for Disaster Risk**

Reduction (UNDRR) is an office that helps countries plan for natural disasters. They conducted a survey and found that **72 percent of persons with disabilities** said that they had no plan in case of disasters.

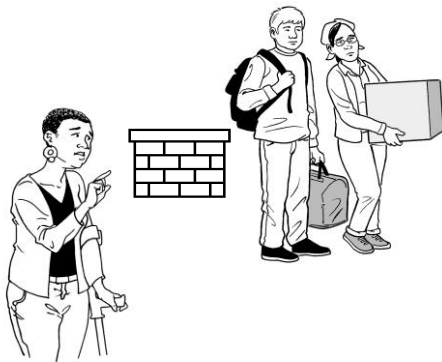
Key Issues



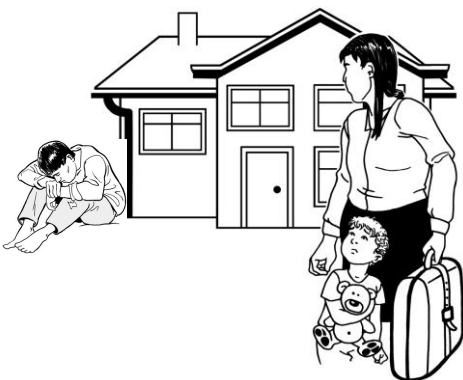
A review of disaster risk and climate change policies in Europe and Central Asia found no information on disability inclusion in these policies.



Climate change leads to droughts and dangerous storms like cyclones. These weather changes can force people to move. They are being displaced.

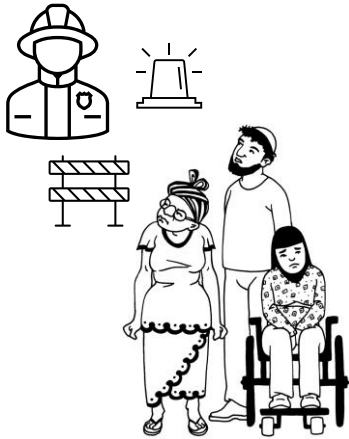


Persons with disabilities may not be able to escape the situation and may be left behind.



Persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities have the most challenges. Persons with disabilities are more likely to die. Families with persons with disabilities have more difficulties during evacuation.

Key Issues



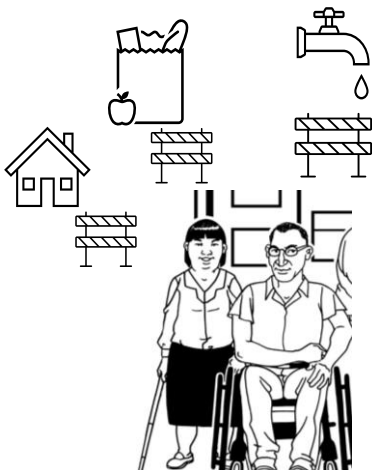
The needs of persons with disabilities are often overlooked during and after disasters, especially during evacuations and early on in crisis situations. Persons with disabilities face difficulties getting the help they need like rehabilitation, mental health support, and assistive products during and after disasters. This causes them further hardship.



Many emergency and disaster relief sites are inaccessible to persons with disabilities. Physical barriers prevent them from getting food and water. They are more likely to experience violence and abuse during and after disasters. Their needs are often ignored during long-term recovery.



Communities also fail in identifying people who have disabilities. They usually only identify people with visible disabilities, or those who report themselves. People with sensory, intellectual, developmental, and psychosocial disabilities are less likely to be identified.



Natural disasters also greatly affect the families and households of persons with disabilities. Natural disasters can take away their jobs, money, and lessen the amount of food they have or can buy.

Key Issues



Indigenous people with disabilities are more affected by climate change. They live in close relationship with nature and changes in weather affect them directly. Participation of indigenous persons with disabilities in climate action is low.

Indigenous or native people are related to the original people living in a region



A country's actions to solve climate change, can hurt persons with disabilities if they are not part of the planning.

Green and digital transitions are opportunities to make society more inclusive if persons with disabilities are participating.



For example, a country may plan to reduce carbon emissions from cars by making gas more expensive. If public transportation is not accessible to persons with disabilities, they lose their ability to get around if they cannot afford gas.



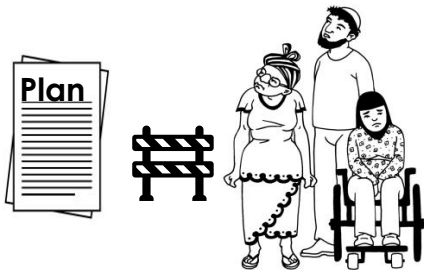
Much needs to be done to include persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction, and resilience against natural disasters.

Many people still think general disaster risk planning is enough.

Key Issues



The needs of persons with disabilities should be considered when planning and responding to disasters.



Often persons with disabilities have no role in the planning process and governments and organizations do not have a good understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities in these situations.



Governments often don't know how to include persons with disabilities in their work. Governments also lack awareness about disabilities.



Extreme stress harms people's mental wellbeing.

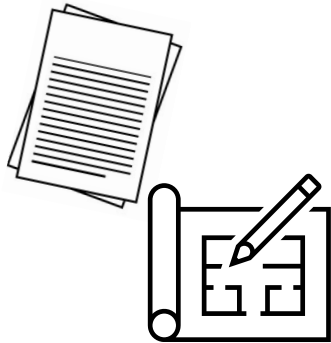
In emergencies persons with disabilities often lose their supports.

Isolated and marginalized people need extra outreach during emergencies.

Ways Forward

This part talks about how persons with disabilities can be part of creating solutions.

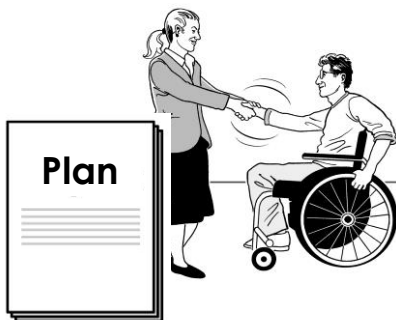
Participation in Rights-Based Action Against Disasters



Many international agreements and plans guide countries to make inclusive disaster risk plans.



Countries that signed the CRPD should look at the Convention when preparing for disasters to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and meet their needs, especially when it comes to housing, access to water and sanitation, and health-care.



Countries are realizing how important it is to include persons with disabilities when creating disaster risk reduction plans and when talking about climate change.



Countries can include persons with disabilities in disaster management committees and disaster response teams. Countries should ask advice from persons with disabilities about their needs during disaster and get their support to raise awareness about inclusive disaster risk reduction.

Participation in Rights-Based Action Against Disasters

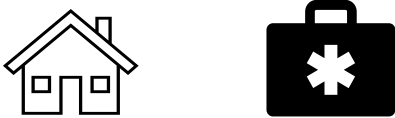
Some countries have included the needs of persons with disabilities in their country's policies, laws, and plans on humanitarian action.



Some countries consider the needs of persons with disabilities in their policies, plans and programs on disaster risk reduction and strengthening against natural disasters.



Some countries have made laws to ensure persons with disabilities are among the first to receive help like medical treatment and housing during natural disasters.



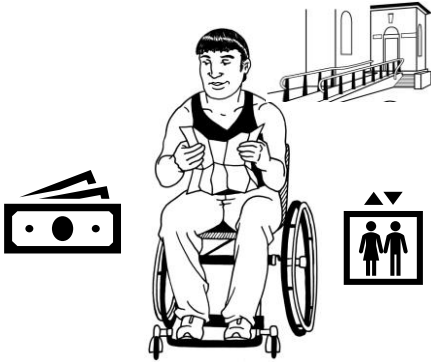
Countries have created plans to search for, rescue, and evacuate persons with disabilities and offer them health care.



Countries ensure persons with disabilities have protection, rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration into social life as victims of natural disasters.

Training on understanding the needs of persons with disabilities is being offered to people helping during emergencies.

Participation in the Decision-Making Process



Some efforts have focused on what can be done after a disaster. Some offer money to persons with disability after a disaster. Some rebuild their community to be more accessible for persons with disabilities.



Some countries offer information on disability-inclusive actions. Information can describe how to best assist persons with disabilities during a disaster. Information can help persons with disabilities understand how to prepare for a disaster.



The COVID-19 pandemic made it more difficult for persons with disabilities to participate in climate action, disaster risk reduction, and resilience against natural disaster.



The pandemic is also a chance to think about how persons with disabilities can be more included in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters.

Participation in the Decision-Making Process



The best way to address the needs of persons with disabilities is to include them in all planning and programming. This is also important when communities are rebuilding after a disaster.



Governments need to work together with organizations of persons with disabilities. Enough resources like money need to be given to ensure persons with disabilities can be included in all aspects of disaster preparedness and response.



Persons with disabilities need to participate in actions on climate change. Information about climate change needs to be accessible. Persons with disabilities need to be part of the decision-making process. They need to receive supports to ensure their wellbeing.



Persons with disabilities and their organizations must be included in international climate negotiations. They need to be included in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

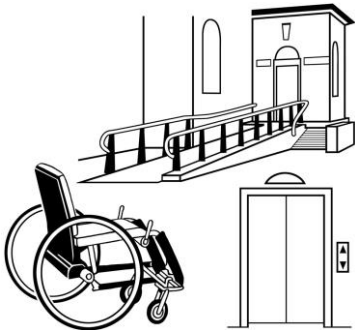
Making Actions Accessible and Inclusive



Some persons with disabilities will need additional special services. It is important to prepare for these special needs by asking persons with disabilities what they will need before a disaster occurs.



Persons with disabilities have the right to information about disaster to protect themselves. Technologies must be accessible. For example, they need to include sign language interpretation and videos.



After a disaster, reconstruction and rebuilding must be inclusive of persons with disabilities. All reconstruction projects should use universal design.

Universal Design is making buildings, products or environments accessible to all people.



Countries should create inclusive standards and indicators. Indicators can show success or failure. Standards are clear expectations for everyone.

Standardized procedures and manuals of agencies working in disaster response need to include guidance on how to ensure safety of persons with disabilities during and after disaster.

Awareness of the Needs of Persons with Disabilities in Local Action



We need to strengthen persons with disabilities in the areas of disaster preparedness and response. This will allow persons with disabilities to protect themselves and survive.



Persons with disabilities can bring their views to disaster planning. This is helpful to everyone. They can also help others after disasters.



Athletes with disabilities can use their popularity to raise awareness of climate change and motivate other persons with disabilities to take action.



Training on disability for aid workers and politicians is important. Aid workers should understand the perspectives, needs, and strengths of persons with disabilities. This is important when working with persons with disabilities in disaster situations.

Awareness of the Needs of Persons with Disabilities in Local Action



Persons with disabilities should be employed by disaster relief organizations in all projects, not only those directly supporting persons with disabilities.



Article 4 of the Convention says that countries must promote **training on disability rights** for people working with persons with disabilities. This will make services better respect the rights of persons with disabilities.



Government staff working in emergency preparedness programs must be disability-aware. It means they need to understand the needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities.



Then they can support equal access for persons with disabilities. This includes involving their representative organizations in climate action and disaster risk reduction policies and laws.

Decrease Discrimination and Violence Against Women and Children with Disabilities During Disaster



It is important to include women and girls with disabilities in disaster protection plans. Persons with disabilities, especially **women and girls, are at risk of becoming victims of violence, abuse, and exploitation** during and after disasters.



Services for gender-based violence and sexual health must be accessible to persons with disabilities, especially women and girls with disabilities.

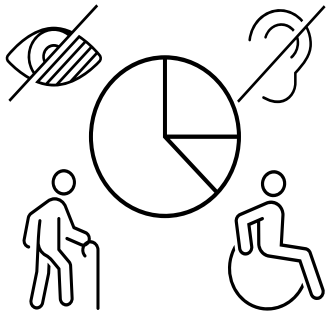


All health, legal, and social services that deal with violence and abuse must be accessible to children, young persons and older persons with disabilities.

Making Research and Data Collection Inclusive

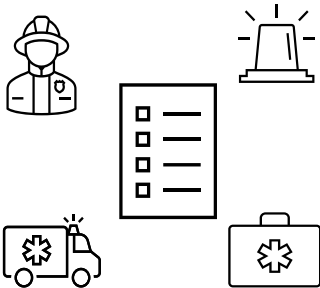


A country's disability inclusive disaster preparedness needs to be reviewed regularly. Experiences of persons with disabilities during disaster response also need to be looked at. Persons with disabilities need to be involved in these reviews.



Communities should collect data to know the numbers of persons with disabilities and understand their needs.

This information helps to make plans for disasters.



Official lists of persons with disabilities who may require support during disasters should be created.



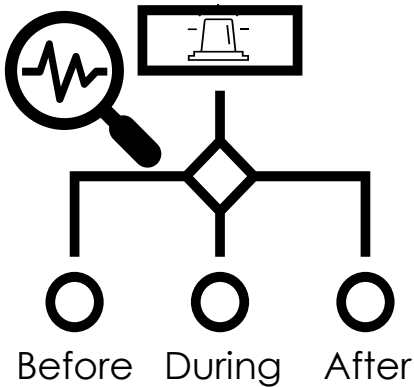
Assessments after disasters should include a disability perspective, including persons with disabilities.

Good evaluation will allow better understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities.

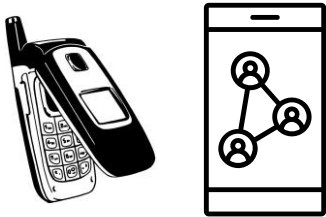
Making Research and Data Collection Inclusive



It is not enough to find out how many persons with disabilities have been hurt or died during a disaster.

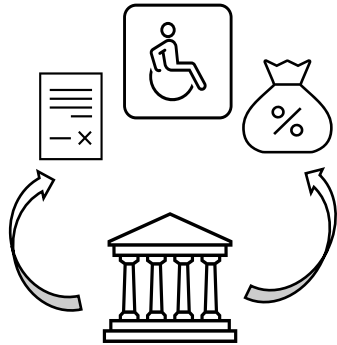


It is important to use good quality information in all phases of a disaster - before, during, and after.

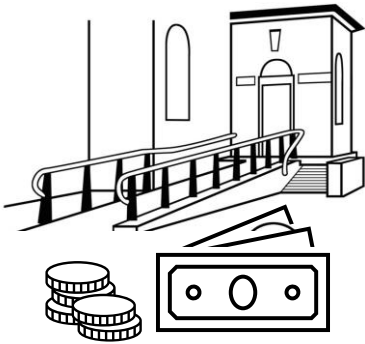


We also need to pay attention to important aspects, like how to utilize new technologies, including cell phones and social media.

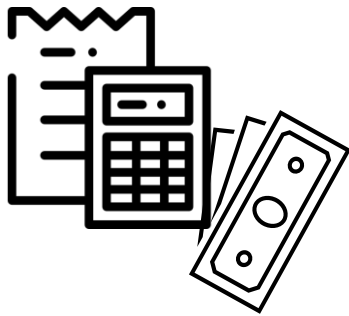
Financial Support for Disability Inclusion



Policies that are inclusive of persons with disabilities need dedicated budgets. Governments must assign enough money for disability inclusion.



It is important to budget money for accessibility, reasonable accommodations, and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities.



Governments must set aside money as early as possible. If we do not know how much disability programs will cost, it is important to set aside an amount that can be used later.



It is important to make sure that the budget can be changed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Questions for Discussion

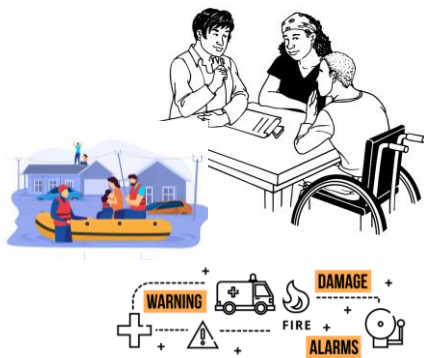
These questions will help to start the conversation of the round table discussion.

Questions for Discussion



What are some good initiatives, programs, and plans that help promote the participation of persons with disabilities in climate action and disaster preparedness and response?

How can we create more of these good examples and use them to address the COVID-19 crisis?



How can we work together to improve the participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction, and resilience against natural disaster?



What can be done to make sure persons with disabilities and their organizations are active participants in climate action and disaster risk reduction now and in the future?



What should countries do to make sure assistive technologies are available during and after a disaster?

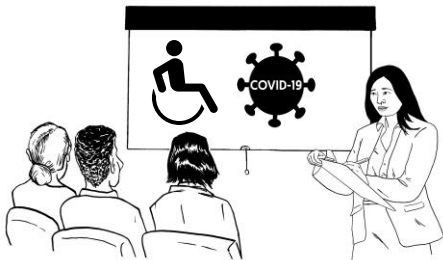
What has been done so far to make sure people who need assistive technologies are getting them and have them during and after disasters?

Questions for Discussion

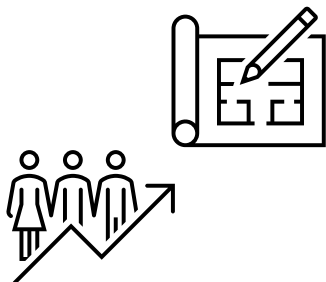


What has been done to develop accessible emergency products and services that are inclusive of the needs of persons with disabilities?

What kind of universal design solutions exist?



How can governments and other organizations make sure persons with disabilities are part of the COVID-19 recovery plan?



How can data gathered from communities and organizations of persons with disabilities help in climate action and disaster risk reduction planning?



How can we make sure that a country's disaster readiness plans are reviewed regularly?

How can we make sure that persons with disabilities and their organizations participate in the review process?



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