



# 1. Executive Summary

---

The global crisis of COVID-19 is deepening pre-existing inequalities, exposing the extent of exclusion and highlighting that work on disability inclusion is imperative. People with disabilities—one billion people—are one of the most excluded groups in our society and are among the hardest hit in this crisis in terms of fatalities.

Even under normal circumstances, persons with disabilities are less likely to access health care, education, employment and to participate in the community. They are more likely to live in poverty, experience higher rates of violence, neglect and abuse, and are among the most marginalized in any crisis-affected community. COVID-19 has further compounded this situation, disproportionately impacting persons with disabilities both directly and indirectly.

An integrated approach is required to ensure that persons with disabilities are not left behind in COVID-19 response and recovery.

It calls for placing them at the centre of the response, particip.

and implementaio-9 (e)-7.. AIOVID-19 related actio- must prohibit any form of discrimo5 (n)-5.3 (a)-9.6 (t)-0.7 (i)-4.6 (o)-12.2 (- )TJ0 -1.526 Td(b)-3.9 (a)-0.9 (s)-6.1 (e)-16.3 (19 response and recovery that better serves everyon, m9 2.3 (o)-5.3 (r)3.2 (e)6.7 ( f)0.8 (u)-0.6 (l)3.5 (l)-5.2 (y)6.9 ( su)-4.4 (p)-5.3 (p)-5.2 (r)3.2 (es)-0.8 (s)2.5 (i)-0.6

---

technologies, and goods and services are not accessible, people with disabilities cannot take necessary decisions, live independently and isolate or quarantine safely, or access health and public services on an equal basis with others.

Ensure meaningful consultation with and active participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in all stages of the COVID-19 response and recovery. Persons with disabilities have important contributions to make in tackling the crisis and building the future. Many persons with disabilities have experience of thriving in situations of isolation and alternate working arrangements that can offer models for navigating the current situation. Perspectives and lived

---

## 2. How COVID-19 impacts persons with disabilities

---

Persons with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. An estimated 46% of older people aged 60 years and over are people with disabilities.<sup>1</sup> 4 S J N S J [ J W ^ \* [ J \ T R U S is likely to experience disability in her life, while one in every ten children is a child with a disability.<sup>2</sup> Of the one billion population of persons with disabilities, 80% live in developing countries.<sup>3</sup>

They represent a diverse population of people with different impairments and support requirements, who face significant barriers in exercising their rights throughout the

lifecycle. Some groups face even greater marginalization—for example persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, persons who are deafblind—who are more likely to be excluded from services, live or be detained in institutions, and experience higher rates of violence, neglect and abuse.

As the report 'Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity' on the socio-economic impact of the pandemic reflects, COVID-19 is not simply a health crisis—it is attacking societies at their core.<sup>4</sup> The response is feeding on pre-existing social and economic inequalities associated with disability and threatens to exacerbate them fu(v)6.9 (544.5 004B00050059>4.3 004



(e.g. intensive care beds, ventilators), are not being based on an individual prognosis, but rather on discriminatory criteria, such as age or assumptions about quality or value of life based on disability.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, access to healthcare, rehabilitation and assistive technologies for persons with disabilities, including with respect to accessibility and affordability,

---

22 United Nations, Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women, April 2020

23 UN Women, COVID-19 and ending violence against women and girls, 2020

24

---

---

A human rights-based approach to disability is required to ensure persons with disabilities are not left behind.<sup>26</sup> Both the CRPD and the 2030 Agenda call for placing persons with disabilities at the centre of all our efforts, as agents of planning and implementation.

A combination of mainstreaming and targeted measures is

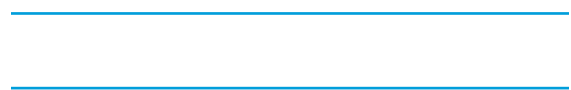




---

## ACCESSIBILITY

---



The following section outlines key actions to protect persons with disabilities from contracting COVID-19 and the impact of lockdowns, physical distancing and isolation measures, and to achieve a disability-inclusive response and recovery.

---

## HEALTH

---

People with disabilities are more susceptible to contracting COVID-19, and barriers to accessing health services, including testing, are exacerbated during the crisis. Lockdowns can lead to restricted access to essential goods and medicines, as well as limit access to supports. The disruption of wider health services puts persons with disabilities at a

---

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_







---

## PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE

---

Persons with disabilities often face incidents of violence in situations of isolation, with women and girls with disabilities at even higher risk.<sup>48</sup>  
Reporting and access to domestic violence

Everything we do during and after the COVID-19 crisis must have a strong focus on building more equal, inclusive and sustainable economies and societies that are more resilient in the face of pandemics and the many other global challenges we face.

Countries' immediate efforts towards social and economic recovery will be crucial for





