



UNDP Policy Brief

A Resilient Future for All

Advancing Disability Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery for Building Resilience and Leaving No One Behind



© UNDP Multi-Country Office in Jamaica



Copyright © UNDP 2023

About the United Nations Development Programme: UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations. For more information, please visit www.undp.org.

UNDP wishes to express its gratitude to the International Disability Alliance (IDA) for the partnership for the development for this publication.

Disclaimer: All rights reserved. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including UNDP, or UN Member States.

Citation: UNDP, 2023, *A Resilient Future for All: Advancing Disability Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery for Building Resilience and Leaving No One Behind*.

Authors: Nino Gvetadze, Ioana Creitaru

Editing: Chris Sheaff

Design and Layout: Claudia Lynch, Antonella Diller

Table of content

- Acknowledgements 3
- 1. Context 5
- 2. Rationale 7
- 3. At a glance: Six features of an effective disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery initiative for UNDP 8
- 4. Understanding the features of an effective disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery initiative 9
 - 1 A rights-based approach 9
 - 2 A twin-track approach to disability inclusion 12
 - 3 Meaningful participation and leadership of persons with disabilities 20
 - 4 Equal partnerships with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities 20
 - 5 Quality disaggregated data 23
 - 6 Innovation, technology and digital solutions 26
- 5. Measuring impact 28
- Glossary of terms 30
- Endnotes 33

List of case studies

- [Case study 1.](#) Empowering women and girl with disabilities and reducing inequality through awareness-raising initiatives on gender-based violence..... 11
- [Case study 2.](#) Learning from Ukraine’s experience: Efforts towards inclusive evacuation for persons with disabilities 16
- [Case study 3.](#) Twin-track approach to disability inclusion in practice 19
- [Case study 4.](#) Promoting inclusive sustainable development in the face of climate change 22
- [Case study 5.](#) Ways of utilizing disability data within UNDP's disaster risk reduction and recovery initiatives..... 25
- [Case study 6.](#) Promoting disability inclusion in disaster resilience through the use of technology and disability data..... 27

Acknowledgements

This UNDP Policy Brief was developed by UNDP's Crisis Bureau/Disaster Risk Reduction for Building Resilience Team collaboratively with the International Disability Alliance (IDA) through extensive consultations with UNDP practitioners and partners, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations (OPDs).

This UNDP Policy Brief was authored by Nino Gvetadze, Disability Inclusion Advisor (consultant) at UNDP Crisis Bureau together with Ioana Creitaru, Programme Specialist, Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery for Building Resilience Team and Elham Youssefian, Inclusive Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction, IDA. The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to the development of this UNDP Policy Brief. The authors are also thankful to Alisa Sivathorn, Disability Inclusion and Empowerment Specialist, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub, who supported with facilitating the design workshop, Chris Sheaff, a United Nations Volunteer for providing proofreading and copyediting services for the UNDP Policy Brief, as well as Claudia Lynch and Antonella Diller, UNDP research interns.

Thanks are due to the Organisations of Persons with Disabilities and UNDP Country Offices who informed the development of this UNDP Policy Brief. From the two design workshops organized in May 2023 we thank the representatives from 11 Organizations of Persons with Disabilities which were the Women with Disabilities Development Foundation Bangladesh, National Council of Disabled Women Bangladesh, Lao Disabled People's Association, PALUMA – an OPD from Indonesia, Disability Service Center Lao, Can Tho Association of People with Disabilities Vietnam, Timor Leste Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan (RHTO), Sri Lanka Foundation for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities of Ukraine (NAPD), The National Agency for Persons with Disabilities of Djibouti, and Together Foundation – an OPD from Albania, and the Centre for Disability in Development Bangladesh (CDD) – a disability-focused organization. Additionally we thank the convening practitioners and disability focal points from 22 UNDP Country Offices – Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Djibouti, Georgia, Ghana, Indonesia, Lao, Lebanon, Macedonia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, Tongo & Kiribati, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

This UNDP Policy Brief is based on the "Review of the State of Disability Inclusion in UNDP's Disaster Risk Reduction, Recovery and Resilience Building Initiatives" developed in 2022. It is grounded in the analysis of 64 projects from 36 countries, interviews with 36 representatives of 13 UNDP Country Offices (Armenia, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Vanuatu and Sudan), and insights collected through a series of UNDP global events.

The UNDP Policy Brief was finalized following an extensive peer review process involving 42 reviewers. Sincere thanks to the six HQ practitioners, five regional practitioners, 21 practitioners from 14 UNDP Country Offices (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Georgia, Ghana, Indonesia, Libya, Lao, Nepal, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam), and 10 practitioners from nine Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (the Cambodian Disabled People's Organization, Ghana's National Council on Persons with Disability, Lao

Disabled People's Association, Lao Disability Service Center, National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities of Ukraine, North Macedonia's Polio Plus, North Macedonia's Bravura Cooperativa, North Macedonia's Association for Support of Persons with Cerebral Palsy in Veles and the International Disability Alliance) who took part in the review.

©UNDP Vietnam



1. Context

In the past two decades, there has been a sharp rise in recorded disasters.¹ When a disaster strikes, persons with disabilities often face disproportionate impacts due to attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers.² These barriers hinder the participation of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and impede their access to essential services during times of crisis.

Persons with disabilities make up 16 per cent of the world's population or approximately 1.3 billion people.³ Moreover, 80 per cent of persons with disabilities live in the Global South and are often some of the poorest in their communities.^{4,5} The mortality rate among persons with disabilities in some disaster occurrences has been recorded to be two to four times higher compared to persons without disabilities.⁶

Persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction decision-making

Certain subgroups within the disability community, such as women and girls with disabilities, older persons, Indigenous Peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and migrants with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities and persons with deaf-blindness, face higher risks of being left behind in DRR and recovery efforts. The limited visibility of these underrepresented groups in decision-making processes often leads to their exclusion from crucial initiatives that impact their lives.

The [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#) marks a significant milestone as the first among the major post-2015 development frameworks explicitly recognizing persons with disabilities as key stakeholders and contributors to DRR decision-making and practice. The framework establishes inclusion as a fundamental guiding principle and highlights the importance of adopting a people-centred approach that considers disability, gender, age and cultural perspectives in all DRR policies and practices. This commitment to inclusion aligns with the broader vision of the [2030 Agenda](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), including seven goals that specifically relate to DRR.⁷ Achieving these goals requires the full inclusion and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities to build resilient communities for all.

The [Midterm Review Report of the Sendai Framework Implementation](#) revealed that countries are not making sufficient progress towards achieving its objectives by 2030.⁸ Disability inclusion is consistently under-resourced and undervalued, lacking substantial initiatives to promote inclusion.⁹ Despite some advancements in supportive policies and legislation for disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction, implementation remains slow and inconsistent, often reliant on short-term funding from non-state actors.¹⁰

Furthermore, the results of the UNDRR 2023 Global Survey on Persons with Disabilities and Disasters show limited progress in disability inclusion over the past 10 years, with no significant differences across the regions.¹¹



2. Rationale

UNDP is committed to achieving transformative and lasting change for persons with disabilities. The organization’s [Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#) places an emphasis on its collaboration with the United Nations system to ensure the effective implementation of the [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy](#) (UNDIS). Progress in this area is closely monitored using a dedicated project marker, underscoring UNDP’s ongoing commitment to disability inclusion across its programming and operations.

Guided by its corporate [Guidance on Disability-inclusive Development](#), UNDP contributes to the implementation of the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD), including [Article 11](#), which focuses on the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, as well as other relevant international human rights instruments. Concurrently, [UNDP’s Crisis Offer](#) aligns with and reinforces the guiding principles and objectives of the Sendai Framework and the UNFCCC [Paris Climate Agreement](#), reaffirming its commitment to an all-of-society approach.

Yet, a systemic change in approaches remains essential for reducing disaster and climate change-related risks and their disproportionate impact on persons with disabilities.

In line with this imperative, the UNDP Policy Brief, developed collaboratively with the International Disability Alliance (IDA) through extensive consultations with UNDP practitioners and partners, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, emphasizes the importance of mainstreaming disability inclusion within UNDP’s DRR and recovery practice area.¹²

The UNDP Policy Brief recognizes disability inclusion as a fundamental element in building resilient communities and honouring the commitment to ‘leave no one behind’ within the framework of the [2030 Agenda](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).

The UNDP Policy Brief aims to guide UNDP staff and its partners by providing principles and good practices for disability inclusion in DRR and recovery, while promoting inclusive approaches that recognize and address the rights of persons with disabilities and their requirements in all their diversity.

The UNDP Policy Brief underlines the importance of institutionalizing disability inclusion within UNDP and ensuring the full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities, individually and through their representative organizations, while applying a human rights-based approach across all areas of UNDP’s work.¹³ By doing so, the ultimate goal is to foster community resilience and ensure that no one is left behind in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda.



3. At a glance: Six features of an effective disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery initiative for UNDP

The visual below outlines the six essential elements for a successful disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery initiative for UNDP. These elements are elaborated on in the subsequent sections of the UNDP Policy Brief.

Figure 1. Six features of an effective disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery initiative

- 1** Embraces a rights-based approach for inclusive, accessible, and equitable DRR and recovery for building resilience. 
- 2** Adopts a twin-track approach by mainstreaming disability inclusion and implementing targeted disability-specific interventions to ensure full inclusion in all aspects of DRR and recovery. 
- 3** Removes barriers and fosters the meaningful participation and leadership of persons with disabilities as agents of change in risk reduction and recovery. 
- 4** Establishes equal partnerships with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities including underrepresented groups to enhance DRR and recovery efforts. 
- 5** Utilizes quality disaggregated data and adopts an intersectional approach to improve the understanding of risks. 
- 6** Harnesses innovation, technology, and digital solutions to promote accessibility and inclusion in DRR and recovery. 

4. Understanding the features of an effective disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery initiative

The following key elements present a high-level framework for strengthening disability-inclusive initiatives in DRR, recovery and resilience building within UNDP that help advance the implementation of the Sendai Framework, the Paris Climate Agreement, the CRPD and the full realization of the SDGs.

1 A rights-based approach is key for inclusive accessible and equitable disaster risk reduction and recovery.

Guided by the UN Charter and human rights instruments, such as the CRPD, UNDP's work is underpinned by the key human rights principles: universality, indivisibility, equality, non-discrimination, participation and accountability.

A human-rights based-approach in disaster risk reduction and recovery

UNDP adopts a human rights-based approach throughout all pillars of its work, including in its disaster risk reduction and recovery practice area, by placing human rights – and as such, the rights of persons with disabilities – at the heart of its policies and practices. A rights-based approach in DRR and recovery acknowledges the social and systemic barriers faced by persons with disabilities, and treats persons with disabilities as equal rights holders, stakeholders and partners. By ensuring autonomy and dignity of persons with disabilities, and removal of barriers, including of discriminatory laws, policies and practices, UNDP contributes to building more resilient communities that prioritize the rights of all individuals in its DRR and recovery efforts.

UNDP also strives to make a positive difference by promoting awareness and knowledge among responsible duty bearers – key DRR stakeholders at national and subnational levels regarding disability inclusion. This effort entails the use of effective communication and disability-inclusive language and terminology, aligning with the rights-based approach as outlined in the CRPD. This includes using person-first language, which places the ‘person’ before their ‘disability’ and recognizing that societal barriers and lack of support may contribute to vulnerability. Moreover, UNDP does not employ acronyms like “PWD” (person with disability) to ensure individuals are treated with dignity and their rights are upheld.

To effectively implement the rights-based approach in its DRR and recovery initiatives, it is essential for UNDP to mainstream disability inclusion across all policies, programmes and practices. It is also important to establish disability markers and minimum criteria for allocation of financial resources for disability inclusion, starting with consideration of at least accessibility and reasonable accommodation costs. This entails making deliberate efforts to ensure the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in both the development and implementation of projects and in internal organizational procedures. Moreover, by adhering to a rights-based approach, UNDP stands firmly against any policy or programme that may undermine the rights of persons with disabilities, such as segregated education, institutionalization or denial of legal capacity. Instead, the organization actively advocates for the promotion of inclusive practices that uphold the rights, dignity and autonomy of individuals with disabilities.

At the same time, UNDP recognizes that providing persons with disabilities with leadership roles and actively drawing on expertise available within the organization and among local actors is essential, along with investing adequate resources for developing capacity within the organization itself.

It is critical to invest in continuous capacity development of UNDP personnel and partners on the key principles of disability inclusion, including mandatory on-boarding training and sensitization for the new staff, providing them with the necessary knowledge and practical tools to support the equal and meaningful participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in DRR and recovery.

Throughout this process, it is crucial to adopt an intersectional lens that recognizes disability as a risk multiplier that intersects with various identity characteristics and social determinants (e.g., gender, age, ethnic and socio-economic status), and amplifies existing social inequalities and increases imbalances.¹⁴ This understanding should serve as a foundation for inclusive and risk-informed programming.

Case study 1

Empowering women and girls with disabilities and reducing inequality through awareness-raising initiatives on gender-based violence

In Vietnam, UNDP leads the UN Joint Programme on Disability Inclusion with UNFPA and UNICEF. The programme focuses on reducing inequality and risks for persons with disabilities, particularly for women and girls with disabilities. A key priority of the programme is to prevent gender-based violence and improve communication on this issue. This is achieved through awareness-raising initiatives, capacity-building for leaders of women's clubs for disabilities and opportunities for women and girls to showcase their artistic talents in projects addressing gender-based violence. The performances were created and performed by amateur artists with disabilities, using their talents to raise awareness of the gender-based violence issues they face.

The project also developed the national guidelines on disability-inclusive sexual and reproductive health services with the active involvement of women and adolescent girls with disabilities (UNFPA component under the Joint Programme). These guidelines were designed to uphold a rights-based approach by prioritizing the principles of free and informed consent for women and girls with disabilities. Additionally, the guidelines strongly condemn and prevent any harmful practices, such as sterilization or forced abortion, ensuring the protection of reproductive rights and bodily autonomy. Through active participation in the development and implementation of these guidelines, women and girls with disabilities acquire valuable skills and become effective advocates in their communities.

The programme also enhances the capacity of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, with a focus on women, girls, adolescents, youth, Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQI and other underrepresented groups, in policy advocacy and the revision of relevant laws and development plans. The meaningful participation of persons with disabilities is central to the multisectoral approach adopted by the programme, with key stakeholders such as the Vietnam Federation on Disability and Vietnam Blind Association being fully engaged from project inception to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

For further details, read the blog ["Beyond disasters: How UNDP is addressing inequality and empowering women with disabilities for a resilient future."](#)



2 Using a twin-track approach to disability inclusion is vital for ensuring no one is left behind.

Effective disability inclusion necessitates two types of actions, which are referred to as the twin-track approach to disability inclusion.

Figure 2. Twin-track approach to disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery for UNDP

Mainstreaming

- Removing barriers to participation
- Facilitating access to disaster risk information and services



Targeting

- Targeted capacity strengthening
- Individualized support and services

Equality of rights and opportunities for all persons with disabilities, resulting in more resilient and inclusive communities

Track 1. Mainstream approach

Mainstreaming disability inclusion in all DRR and recovery initiatives

The mainstream approach focuses on ensuring the full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in all UNDP DRR and recovery projects, programmes and initiatives. It involves incorporating disability considerations throughout policy and programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The goal is to prevent the perpetuation of inequality by enabling persons with disabilities to fully participate in and benefit from DRR and recovery initiatives on an equal basis with others.

The following examples demonstrate the practical implementation of the mainstream approach by UNDP and its partners. Country-specific illustrations are provided in text boxes for better understanding.

1 | Training, awareness raising and capacity building on disability inclusion as part of the broader disaster risk reduction and recovery initiatives

UNDP mainstreams disability inclusion as part of the broader capacity-building initiatives on DRR and recovery for national and local institutions and other relevant stakeholders, including training on disability and accessibility, and on how to effectively support people with disabilities during disasters. These initiatives aim to sensitize key stakeholders on disability inclusion and promote the adoption of inclusive practices and approaches. At the same time, UNDP promotes the sharing of concrete technical knowledge on the barriers faced by persons with disabilities during disasters and recovery. This is achieved by actively involving persons with disabilities themselves in these capacity-building initiatives, enabling DRR and recovery actors to enhance their practices. By adopting this approach, UNDP ensures that persons with disabilities are not isolated in separate activities and instead fosters an inclusive and safe environment for everyone. To tackle stigma associated with disability in certain contexts, UNDP acknowledges that there is a need to implement awareness-raising sessions or campaigns to foster the social integration and inclusion of persons with disabilities, especially the underrepresented groups.

2 | Inclusive community-based risk assessment and planning

UNDP supports countries in integrating disability inclusion into their disaster and multi-risk informed development plans and strategies through the inclusive community-based risk assessment and planning. This involves the active engagement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including underrepresented groups, to ensure their requirements and capacities are considered during risk assessments. It also includes identifying barriers faced by persons with disabilities and incorporating their perspectives into the overall risk assessment process. This enables the formulation of inclusive mitigation measures and the allocation of resources to strengthen community resilience.

3 | Accessible risk information and inclusive early warning systems

Inclusive and accessible multi-hazard early warning systems enable anticipatory action protecting lives, assets and livelihoods. UNDP focuses on developing inclusive early warning systems that effectively reach everyone, including persons with disabilities, considering their diverse requirements. This involves establishing community-based systems and protocols with clear time frames, adequate resources, budget allocations, trained staff and clear responsibilities. For instance, UNDP promotes the use of accessible communication formats, digital systems and channels, including visual, auditory, sign language and tactile modes, to ensure information is accessible to all. Additionally, UNDP supports the utilization of assistive technologies for alert dissemination and conducts outreach campaigns using inclusive communication channels. Furthermore, UNDP works with its partners, including Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, underrepresented groups and other relevant stakeholders, towards ensuring inclusive and accessible evacuation procedures that cater to the requirements of all individuals, including persons with disabilities in their diversity. This entails assistance to persons with disabilities to enable them to leave places where they are arbitrarily detained (see, for example, the [case study](#) below on Ukraine, where UNDP in collaboration with the National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities developed the [Guidelines for Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities](#)). For more examples, read the blogs from the [Bahamas](#) and [Thailand](#).

4 | Disability-inclusive recovery programming

UNDP is committed to disability-inclusive recovery programming, recognizing the importance of eliminating barriers and providing equal opportunities for all persons with disabilities, including for people who are in the process of deinstitutionalization and accommodated in group homes or other institutional settings. This approach takes a holistic view, acknowledging that barriers extend beyond physical obstacles. To foster inclusion and reduce disaster risk, UNDP prioritizes adopting Universal design principles and improving accessibility in infrastructure, information and communications, which benefits not only persons with disabilities but society as a whole (see the [Glossary of Terms](#) for the definition and examples of Universal design). By investing in inclusive pre-disaster recovery planning and capacity strengthening, UNDP strives to ensure that disability-related requirements and concerns are prioritized as part of the post-disaster response and recovery processes, including incorporation of measures in post-disaster needs assessments and recovery frameworks that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the specific requirements of persons with disabilities. Throughout the recovery and reconstruction process, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including underrepresented groups, serve as vital allies in advancing disability inclusion. UNDP involves Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, recognizing their crucial role in ensuring disability inclusion and promoting their meaningful participation in all stages of recovery and reconstruction efforts.

5 | Disability-inclusive risk governance

UNDP assists countries in enhancing their risk governance frameworks to ensure effective management of disaster risk. This involves facilitating the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including underrepresented groups, in decision-making processes, policy development and institutional arrangements related to disaster risk reduction, such as the National DRR Platforms, and regional and local governance structures, as well as in shaping recovery efforts.

6 | Accessible infrastructure investments

UNDP advocates and provides support for accessible infrastructure investments. This entails the construction of accessible evacuation routes and the retrofitting of critical infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools, shelters, workplace and public facilities, to ensure they are safe and fully accessible in accordance with national guidelines and the principles of Universal design. UNDP works closely with persons with disabilities through their representative organizations to ensure their active involvement in the planning, implementation and monitoring of these initiatives.

© UNDP Vietnam



Case study 2

Learning from Ukraine's experience: Efforts towards inclusive evacuation for persons with disabilities

In 2022, the UNDP Country Office in Ukraine conducted a rapid assessment to address the primary barriers confronting persons with disabilities in accessing humanitarian aid, particularly during evacuations amidst the ongoing war. The main objective of the assessment was to generate actionable recommendations and practical tools for all stakeholders involved in evacuating persons with disabilities, for improving the evacuation process and ensuring equitable access to related services for persons with disabilities. Building upon the findings of the assessment, UNDP collaborated closely with the National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities (NAPD) to develop the [Guidelines for Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities](#). These guidelines serve as a valuable resource intended to support public authorities and legal entities in effectively arranging evacuations and ensuring seamless post-evacuation placement. Through these measures, the rights of persons with disabilities can be safeguarded at an appropriate level throughout the entire evacuation process.

This initiative forms an integral part of the "Mainstreaming Gender-Responsive Disability Inclusion in Humanitarian Response in Ukraine" Joint Programme, which represents a collaborative effort among UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF and UNFPA. The programme's overarching goal is to assist Ukraine in meeting its obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The endeavour was made possible by financial support from the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) Multi-Partner Trust Fund.

By leveraging the experiences and lessons learned from Ukraine, this example underscores the significance of studying successful practices and incorporating them into policy development. Understanding the barriers faced by persons with disabilities during crises and adopting effective strategies can lead to considerable improvements in disability inclusion, fostering a more resilient and equitable society.



Track 2. Targeted approach

Implementing specific projects, programmes and/or initiatives that directly target persons with disabilities and address their requirements in DRR and recovery

The targeted approach acknowledges that persons with disabilities may face physical, communication, attitudinal, institutional, financial and/or social barriers, requiring tailored initiatives to ensure their safety, protection, full inclusion and participation in all DRR and recovery for building resilience initiatives. Specific examples of targeted actions for UNDP include:

1 | Provision of assistive devices and technology

UNDP strives to ensure that persons with disabilities in high-risk or disaster-affected areas have access to the necessary assistive devices and technology. This includes facilitating the distribution of assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, white canes, prostheses, orthoses and communication devices, based on individual requirements. By having access to these devices and technology, individuals with disabilities can enhance their mobility, communication and functional independence, enabling their active participation in and access to DRR and recovery initiatives and services.

2 | Disability-specific services

UNDP acknowledges the importance of offering specialized support services, including health, rehabilitation and psychosocial support, temporary safe zones, referrals as well as accessible transportation, information, communication and coverage of costs related to reasonable accommodation, such as support personnel or personal assistants, sign interpretation, etc. (for further details and examples of 'reasonable accommodation' please refer to the [Glossary of Terms](#)). These services aim to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access essential health and other basic services to address their immediate and long-term recovery needs. Furthermore, UNDP is committed to supporting States in advancing and accelerating the deinstitutionalization process during emergencies and it works towards ensuring access to recovery and rehabilitation services, as well as access to justice for persons with disabilities.

3 | Targeted and tailored capacity building support and empowerment

UNDP provides targeted capacity-building support, vocational training, entrepreneurship support and inclusive employment opportunities to persons with disabilities. These initiatives promote the economic empowerment and resilience of persons with disabilities in the aftermath of disasters.

The twin-track approach to inclusion can only lead to successful outcomes for persons with disabilities if focus is placed on both tracks, as they complement each other.

To effectively implement the twin-track approach, it is essential to adopt integrated approaches and foster cross-practice within UNDP. This involves promoting collaboration and synergy among different teams within the organization, such as those working on disability inclusion, DRR and climate action, governance and other relevant areas. By leveraging the existing in-house capacities, expertise and networks, UNDP can ensure a comprehensive and coordinated programming that fully integrates disability inclusion into all its initiatives.

Practical guidance and practice development play a vital role in advancing UNDP's commitment to disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery. UNDP recognizes the importance of developing and sharing practical tools, resources, knowledge and good practices to guide its staff and partners to effectively incorporate disability inclusion into their DRR and recovery efforts.

In the context of human resources, the twin-track approach entails designating disability inclusion focal points while simultaneously ensuring that all other personnel are also accountable for disability inclusion mainstreaming into their respective roles/work. It is essential to note that having a focal point does not substitute the need for mainstreaming, and the presence of focal points does not absolve other personnel from their responsibilities towards disability inclusion.



Case study 3

Twin-track approach to disability inclusion in practice

In Bangladesh, the Livelihoods Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project (LIUPCP) and the National Resilience Programme have followed a twin-track approach to disability inclusion.

Under the LIUPCP, efforts have been made to promote access to livelihood opportunities, climate resilient housing and inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities for persons with disabilities, women and other marginalized communities. Key activities included identifying and mapping persons with disabilities in disadvantaged socio-economic conditions, establishing disability focal points in targeted towns, empowering and building leadership capacities of persons with disabilities and promoting inclusive governance through the collaboration between persons with disabilities, community development committees and local authorities.

Similarly, the National Resilience Programme, implemented in partnership with the Centre for Disability in Development (CDD), has focused on disability inclusion. This included the establishment of self-help groups for persons with disabilities, capacity building for inclusive search and rescue, mapping of persons with disabilities in flood-prone areas, involvement of persons with disabilities in community risk assessments and flood preparedness groups, provision of accessible risk information and flood-resilient housing models and ensuring meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the programme implementation.



3 Meaningful participation and leadership of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, in all their diversity, is essential for achieving effective disaster risk reduction and recovery at every stage of the programme cycle.

UNDP is committed to ensuring meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including underrepresented groups, while taking into consideration the gender-disability dimension and intersection of other identity factors in all of its activities throughout the entire programme cycle.

By “meaningful participation,” UNDP means ensuring access to information (such as providing information in accessible formats such as national sign languages), investing in building capacities of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, ensuring accessibility of meetings and including OPD representation in advisory or decision-making bodies, among other measures.

In essence, UNDP works towards removing barriers and investing in accessibility to ensure equal access for individuals with disabilities to the physical environment, risk information, communication, products and services. This represents a crucial step in enabling meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and promoting inclusive practices in DRR and recovery.

4 Establishing equal partnerships with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities is instrumental for inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery.

Persons with disabilities possess unique knowledge and lived experiences of disability that are essential for promoting inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery. To harness this expertise, it is crucial to engage, consult and partner with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities – non-governmental organizations that consist primarily of persons with disabilities and are led and governed by individuals with disabilities themselves.¹⁵ At the same time, it is important to note that Organizations “of” Persons with Disabilities differ from organizations “for” persons with disabilities that primarily offer services or advocate on their

behalf; therefore, consultations and partnerships with Organizations “of” Persons with Disabilities should be prioritized. In cases where Organizations of Persons with Disabilities are not available or fail to adequately represent the diversity of persons with disabilities, direct outreach to individuals and disability groups becomes necessary to ensure their voices are heard and their perspectives considered.

The motto of the disability movement, “nothing without us,” emphasizes the crucial role of consulting and actively involving persons with disabilities in all decision-making and practices that impact their lives. Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, as representative bodies, understand well the requirements of persons with disabilities and are best placed to provide valuable insights for achieving full inclusion. Therefore, it is imperative for UNDP to proactively engage with and support the consultation and participation of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations.

UNDP acknowledges the importance of formalizing partnerships with representative organizations and investing in their capacity strengthening for effective advocacy for the rights of persons with disabilities. This involves supporting long-term transformation and support to core costs, while avoiding competition among Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and actively promoting the inclusion of underrepresented groups. By respecting the mandates and priorities of representative organizations, UNDP recognizes the valuable perspectives and expertise they bring to shaping inclusive DRR policies and programmes. Furthermore, by fostering collaboration and inclusion in decision-making processes, UNDP supports the engagement of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities with other stakeholders in DRR and recovery.¹⁶

UNDP recognizes the value of diverse representation within the representative organizations and makes efforts to ensure that Organizations of Persons with Disabilities it works with encompass a wide range of disabilities, gender identities, ages, ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds and other intersecting identities.

UNDP aims to make small grants or outsourcing projects more accessible for Organizations of Persons with Disabilities by providing reasonable accommodation and fostering equal competition with other NGOs. UNDP also recognizes the importance of connecting with regional Organizations of Persons with Disabilities when specific organizations are not readily identified, strengthening collaboration and promoting inclusivity. As part of its mid/long-term civil society strengthening priorities, UNDP prioritizes investing in capacity strengthening and sourcing of informal networks, supporting them to become more formal and well-organized entities within society.

On the other hand, UNDP is committed to actively building the necessary expertise and collaborative capacity for key DRR actors, including local authorities, to effectively collaborate and engage with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

Case study 4

Promoting inclusive sustainable development in the face of climate change

UNDP works to promote inclusive sustainable development and address the challenges posed by climate change while at the same time ensuring sustainability in all related projects and plans. In Ghana, for example, UNDP has partnered with local Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and the Ghana Federation of Disabled Persons to support sustainable agriculture initiatives. Through the UNDP Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme, UNDP and its partners provide irrigation systems and training, enabling persons with disabilities to participate in farming and increase their resilience to climate change. These efforts aim to improve food security, generate income, empower individuals and promote greater community inclusion and resilience.

© Praise Nutakor, UNDP Ghana



5 Quality disaggregated data is instrumental for understanding disaster risk and informing inclusive risk assessments and recovery planning.

UNDP embraces a [human rights-based approach to data](#) and acknowledges the significant role that high-quality data plays in driving inclusive and equitable disaster risk reduction and recovery efforts. Disability data holds immense importance in comprehending the requirements and concerns of individuals with disabilities, identifying at-risk groups and understanding the barriers they encounter. It serves as a foundation for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and ensuring their meaningful participation. By utilizing quality disaggregated data, strategic delivery of essential services becomes possible, fostering inclusion and empowerment throughout the entire disaster risk management cycle.

A human-rights based-approach to data

The human rights-based approach to data also entails adherence to ethical data practices, defining clear purpose for data collection and gathering only relevant information while upholding principles of transparency, accountability and informed consent. This approach ensures data stewardship, upholding the highest standards in data management to safeguard the rights and well-being of all, including persons with disabilities and other at-risk populations.

UNDP places significant importance on incorporating data collection, mapping and analysis that is disaggregated by at least by sex, age, disability and other relevant/context specific identity factors (e.g., IDP or refugee status) into DRR and recovery initiatives.

UNDP acknowledges the importance of enhancing data skills and systems, both internally and among its partners. Strengthening data collection mechanisms, especially for capturing disaggregated data on disability, is crucial for informed decision-making and designing targeted interventions, and this requires specific capacities and resources. To collect disability data, it is important to understand the population being referred to. UNDP aligns with the understanding provided by the CRPD, which defines disability as a social construct that arises from the interaction between individuals with impairments and the barriers present in society. This definition recognizes the role of societal barriers in creating disability and emphasizes the need to address these barriers to promote inclusion.

Acknowledging that national, regional and local governments are the primary duty bearers responsible for realizing the rights of populations in DRR and recovery contexts, UNDP engages and supports these authorities in strengthening data collection mechanisms,

including population and household surveys, administrative data and disaster risk information systems to capture disability data using internationally recognized tools, such as the [Washington Group Short Set on Functioning](#) (WG-SS). These questions assess whether people have difficulty performing basic, universal activities such as walking, seeing, hearing, cognition, self-care and communication. Disability is measured when at least one domain is coded as 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do it at all.' Using the functioning approach in DRR is important as it enables the identification of individuals who can receive risk information and take appropriate actions, as well as those who may need support in this regard.¹⁷

In addition, UNDP adopts the [Washington Group/UNICEF Module on Child Functioning](#) instead of the WG-SS questions since the latter are not specifically designed for children. To further enhance the identification of individuals with psychosocial disabilities, UNDP utilizes the [WG Short Set on Functioning-Enhanced](#), which includes six additional questions focusing on upper body functioning, depression and anxiety.¹⁸

In situations where data is unavailable or deemed unreliable, and cannot be collected, UNDP relies on global estimates of disability prevalence (16% for adults and 10% for children), recognizing that the absence of data should not hinder taking appropriate action.¹⁹

Simultaneously, while UNDP recognizes the value of tools such as the Washington Group questions in collecting disaggregated data at the individual level, it acknowledges that these tools may not offer a complete understanding of disability. Therefore, UNDP emphasizes the importance of complementing quantitative data collection with qualitative data whenever possible to achieve a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of disability, enabling more targeted and effective disability-inclusive policies, programmes and interventions. Disability data in DRR and recovery must include information on barriers, improved accessibility and documented efforts to remove barriers. The active removal of barriers should occur regardless of the availability of prevalence data.

To enhance data quality, foster meaningful participation and promote accurate insights into the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in disaster contexts, UNDP prioritizes accessibility of the data collection process, including using diverse survey formats and involving persons with disabilities in the design, testing and implementation (see, for example, the blog from [Indonesia](#) and refer to the endnote on accessible surveys).²⁰

Case study 5

The following examples demonstrate the various ways in which disability data can be utilized within UNDP's disaster risk reduction and recovery initiatives:

■ **Post-disaster needs assessments**

Including disability-related indicators and questions in Post-Disaster Needs Assessments to gather data on the needs, capacities and barriers faced by persons with disabilities in post-disaster contexts.

■ **Baseline assessments and situation analyses**

Incorporating disability-related questions and indicators in baseline assessments and situation analyses to establish a starting point for measuring progress and identifying entry points for disability inclusion.

■ **Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)**

Creating dedicated indicators on disability inclusion or using a disability marker as part of the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework to track progress, measure impact and promote evidence-based learning and adaptive management.

■ **Disaster risk assessments**

Incorporating disability-related data and considerations into disaster risk assessments to understand the specific risks faced by persons with disabilities, including marginalized and underrepresented groups, and guide the design of targeted DRR measures.

■ **Advocacy**

Utilizing disability data to advocate for inclusive policies, strategies and practices in DRR and recovery, and to influence decision-making processes at various levels.

■ **Understanding intersectional barriers**

Integrating disability data collection efforts across different sectors to gain a comprehensive understanding of the intersecting requirements and barriers faced by persons with disabilities.

■ **Measuring disability inclusion in disaster risk reduction**

Encouraging relevant stakeholders to adopt disability-disaggregated indicators for measuring the extent of disability inclusion mainstreaming in the DRR programming of the UN agencies.

6 Innovation, technology and digital solutions contribute to enhancing accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction and recovery.

UNDP is committed to designing and implementing inclusive and accessible disaster risk reduction and recovery initiatives by harnessing the power of innovation, technology and digital solutions.

As part of this commitment, UNDP seeks to establish an accelerator for inclusive DRR solutions, promoting the exploration of innovative ideas that prioritize disability inclusion within its [Accelerator Labs](#). In doing so, UNDP aims to foster the discovery and advancement of groundbreaking solutions that enhance accessibility and promote inclusion in its DRR and recovery efforts. By cultivating and amplifying these innovative solutions, UNDP strives to take a leading role in championing inclusive practices and empowering individuals with disabilities to actively contribute to the development of resilient and inclusive communities.

UNDP is exploring and promoting the use of accessible, innovative assistive technologies including mobility aids, hearing devices, communication tools (including audio for persons who are blind and sign language for persons who are deaf) and sensory aids, which aim to enhance mobility, communication and independence of persons with disabilities before, during and after disasters. Moreover, digital solutions such as accessible websites, mobile applications with accessible features (voice and text) and social media platforms with features like captioning, audio descriptions and alternative text are being adopted to ensure critical information reaches individuals with diverse disabilities.

Additionally, UNDP is looking into technology-enabled remote monitoring systems, such as wearable devices, to support the safety and protection of persons with disabilities in disaster situations. These systems can provide timely assistance and enhance inclusion in disaster response and recovery efforts.

UNDP is also exploring the use of digital platforms and virtual reality technologies to provide accessible training and capacity-building opportunities for stakeholders involved in DRR and recovery, including for persons with disabilities.

Case study 6

Promoting disability inclusion in disaster resilience through the use of technology and disability data

As part of the regional UNDP's DX4Resilience project, UNDP and the Indonesian National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB) co-hosted the InaRISK Hackathon Fest 2021 to support BNPB's ongoing efforts to strengthen the national digital geospatial platform, called InaRISK, to make it more accessible for persons with disabilities and other at-risk groups who may otherwise encounter difficulties in evacuating during a disaster.

One of the winners of the Hackathon was the idea of development of a prototype for an accessible wearable early warning and alert system in the form of a bracelet. This innovative device incorporates both text and voice communication channels, making it accessible for individuals with visual and hearing difficulties. The bracelet serves the dual purpose of alerting users about disaster warnings and facilitating their location tracking.

However, due to insufficient funding and resources, the scaling-up of the tool has not been possible so far. Instead, the Country Office focused on scaling up another prototype called Difarisk, also developed as a result of the Hackathon. Difarisk's sub-application offers text-to-speech technology, enabling individuals with hearing difficulties to access disaster risk and service information. While the initial version of the sub-application has been integrated into the InaRISK Personal Application, further improvements are needed to enhance its performance and accessibility. UNDP and the Government of Indonesia are working closely to integrate this feature into InaRISK.



5. Measuring the impact of disability inclusion within UNDP's disaster risk reduction and recovery work

To track the impact of disability inclusion initiatives as outlined in this UNDP Policy Brief, UNDP should adopt a comprehensive approach that involves the following key components:

1 Clear indicators and targets

Introduction of disability markers and establishing clear and measurable indicators and targets related to disability inclusion within DRR and recovery projects to capture relevant data on the inclusion of persons with disabilities throughout the project lifecycle.

2 Data collection and monitoring

Employing robust data collection and monitoring mechanisms to systematically track progress, including the gathering of quantitative and qualitative data, which helps to assess the extent of disability inclusion, identify challenges, lessons learned and successful/promising practices.

3 Participatory approach

Involving persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the monitoring and evaluation process and making necessary adjustments accordingly.

4 Disaggregation of data

Disaggregating data minimum by sex, age and disability to understand the specific requirements of persons with disabilities and the disaster impacts and address the identified barriers.

5 Periodic evaluation

Regular evaluation of disability-inclusive interventions to identify progress, challenges and areas for improvement, and refining strategies, interventions and approaches over time.

6 Learning and knowledge sharing

Fostering a culture of learning and knowledge sharing by capturing and disseminating best practices and lessons learned in disability inclusion and facilitating cross-learning between projects and enhancing the replication of successful approaches.

7 Adaptability and flexibility

Maintaining adaptability and flexibility in its approach to disability inclusion, recognizing that context-specific factors can influence impact and making adjustments to ensure that interventions remain effective and relevant.

8 Accountability and reporting

Ensuring accountability by regularly reporting on the impact of disability inclusion efforts. This includes reporting against the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) as well as to relevant stakeholders, partners and the public, demonstrating the organization's commitment to transparency and results.

By integrating these elements, UNDP can effectively assess the impact of disability inclusion in its DRR and recovery work. This enhances accountability and fosters inclusive, resilient communities.



Glossary of terms

Accessibility: A precondition for the inclusion of persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully and equally in society. Accessibility is relevant in numerous contexts, from the physical environment to information and communication (including digital technologies and systems), and products and services. It requires the identification and elimination of barriers to access for persons with disabilities. Accessibility should always be considered, and measures to improve accessibility for all should be implemented to the maximum extent possible.²¹

Barriers: Factors in a person's environment that hinder participation and create disability. For persons with disabilities, barriers limit access to and inclusion in society. Barriers may be attitudinal, environmental or institutional. Attitudinal barriers are negative attitudes rooted in cultural, religious beliefs, unequal power distribution, discrimination, prejudice, stigma and bias, among other factors. Attitudinal barriers are at the root of discrimination and exclusion. Environmental barriers encompass physical obstacles in the natural or built environment that impede access and limit participation opportunities. This includes inaccessible communication systems, which hinder information access and knowledge for persons with disabilities. Lack of services and issues with service delivery are also considered environmental barriers. Institutional barriers involve discriminatory laws, policies, strategies or institutionalized practices that hinder the participation of persons with disabilities in society. Barriers may be classified as a threat if they are put in place intentionally. They are described as a vulnerability if their occurrence is inadvertent. In both cases, barriers lead to exclusion, making it likely that persons with disabilities will face more or worse threats and vulnerabilities than others affected by a disaster.²²

Disability: Result of an interaction between impairments and physical, attitudinal, institutional, communication social and/or other barriers.

Disability inclusion: Disability inclusion is achieved when persons with disabilities meaningfully participate in all their diversity, when their rights are promoted and when disability-related concerns are addressed in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).²³

Disability inclusion mainstreaming: The process of systematically and proactively incorporating the requirements and perspectives of persons with disabilities into all aspects of disaster risk reduction and recovery efforts. It involves ensuring that disability considerations are integrated into policies, programmes and projects across various sectors, without creating separate or segregated initiatives. The goal is to promote the safety, protection and dignity of persons with disabilities and to ensure persons with disabilities have full access to services and can participate meaningfully in DRR in and recovery efforts on an equal basis with others.

Disaster risk reduction: Disaster risk reduction is aimed at preventing new and reducing existing disaster risk and managing residual risk, all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore to the achievement of sustainable development. Disaster risk

reduction is the policy objective of disaster risk management, and its goals and objectives are defined in disaster risk reduction strategies and plans.²⁴

Enablers: Measures that remove barriers, or reduce their effects, and improve the resilience or protection of persons with disabilities.

Intersectionality: Persons with disabilities are not a homogenous group and due consideration should be given to intersectionality – the intersection of disability together with other factors, for example gender, age or ethnicity, which may heighten discrimination and increase the barriers to full participation and meaningful inclusion in society.²⁵

Meaningful participation: Active and substantive involvement of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes, activities and initiatives that directly impact their lives. Meaningful participation entails creating an inclusive environment where barriers are removed and diverse voices are heard and valued. It goes beyond mere representation and tokenism, aiming to provide individuals with disabilities with opportunities to contribute their perspectives, ideas and expertise on an equal basis with others in the planning, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes and services that affect them.²⁶ Meaningful participation is a core element of the human rights-based approach and a precondition for implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and achieving the 2030 Agenda (Article 4.3 of the CRPD requires close consultation with and active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations).²⁷

Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs): Representative organizations of persons with disabilities that are led, and majority governed, by persons with disabilities themselves. OPDs may focus on a range of disabilities or represent specific groups, such as women or Indigenous Peoples with disabilities. Operating at different levels, OPDs can function as individual organizations, coalitions or umbrella organizations, uniting diverse constituencies of persons with disabilities.²⁸

Persons with disabilities: Individuals who have long-term physical, psychosocial, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.²⁹

Reasonable accommodation: In the context of disability inclusion, 'reasonable accommodation' is a necessary and appropriate modification or adjustment, in policy, programme or environment, not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, that enables persons with disabilities to exercise their rights on an equal basis with others. It is relevant to all contexts and may or may not have cost implications.³⁰ The denial of reasonable accommodation is a denial of rights and is also considered discrimination under the CRPD. Examples of reasonable accommodation may entail personal assistance including support for evacuations, accessible transport and infrastructure (e.g., shelter and housing), and diverse forms and channels of communication. Reasonable accommodation complements accessibility measures to strengthen equality. While accessibility measures are provided upfront to increase accessibility for all, reasonable accommodation may be requested by persons with disabilities on an individual basis when they have remaining accessibility requirements.³¹

Resilience: The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.³²

Twin-track approach: Adoption of a twin-track approach is a core element of any strategy that seeks to mainstream disability inclusion successfully. The approach combines: (i) the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream policies, programmes, communications, etc. with (ii) targeted interventions specifically for persons with disabilities.

Underrepresented groups: Certain subgroups within the disability community, such as women and girls with disabilities, older persons, Indigenous Peoples, refugees, IDPs and migrants with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, persons with deaf-blindness and others, who face higher risks of being left behind in DRR and recovery efforts. Their limited visibility in decision-making processes often leads to exclusion from crucial initiatives that impact their lives.

Universal design: The design of products, environments, programmes and services to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation, reconfiguration or specialized design. Universal design aims to remove barriers to participation and maximize usability for the widest range of individuals. Examples include designing accessible evacuation routes and shelters (this benefits not only persons with disabilities but also older people, parents with young children and anyone with temporary injuries or functioning difficulties), and implementing early warning systems that utilize multiple modes of communication (audible, visual and tactile) so that emergency alerts can be understood by everyone, including those with hearing or vision impairments, as well as individuals who may be in loud or visually crowded environments.

Endnotes

¹ UNDRR, CRED (2020). [The Human Cost of Disasters 2000-2019](#).

² For further information on barriers, please refer to the [Glossary of Terms](#).

³ WHO (2023). [The Fact Sheet on Disability and Health](#).

⁴ WHO (2022). [The Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities](#).

⁵ The World Bank. [Challenges Facing Persons with Disabilities in Sub-Saharan Africa](#).

⁶ Disability Information Resource, [The Great East Japan Earthquake and Disabled Persons: Their High Mortality Rate, Factors that Hindered the Support and the Current Challenges](#) (2012).

⁷ SDG 1: No Poverty - DRR can reduce poverty and increase resilience to disasters. SDG 2: Zero Hunger - DRR can protect food security and prevent hunger and malnutrition. SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being - DRR can safeguard public health by reducing disaster risks, including those caused by climate change. SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure - Investing in disaster-resilient infrastructure can reduce the impacts of disasters and promote sustainable development. SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities - Building resilient cities and communities is essential for reducing disaster risk and ensuring sustainable development. SDG 13: Climate Action - Mitigating and adapting to climate change is a crucial aspect of DRR. SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals - Collaboration between governments, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders is essential for achieving the SDGs, including those related to DRR.

⁸ UNDRR (2023). [The Report of the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework](#)

⁹ Gvetadze, N. & Pertiwi, P. (2022). [Including Persons with Disabilities in Disaster Risk Reduction: A Research Study from Eight Countries of Africa, Asia and South/Central America](#).

Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund, Centre for Disability in Development, CBM International, International Disability Alliance, and Malteser International.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Key findings from the UNDRR 2023 Global Survey Report on Persons with Disabilities and Disasters: 84% of survey respondents (persons with disabilities) do not have a personal preparedness plan for disasters, 56% do not have access to risk information, only 11% are aware of DRR plans at national and 14% at local levels, 86% remain excluded from community-based DRR and 75% reported lack of awareness or absence of mechanisms for participation in DRR decision-making and practice at community level.

¹² This UNDP Policy Brief was developed by UNDP's Crisis Bureau/Disaster Risk Reduction for Building Resilience Team collaboratively with the International Disability Alliance (IDA) through extensive consultations with UNDP practitioners and partners, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations (OPDs). Spanning over a period of two years, the process that informed the development of this UNDP Policy Brief included: (i) two design workshops organized in May 2023 convening practitioners and disability focal points from 22 UNDP Country Offices (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Djibouti, Georgia, Ghana, Indonesia, Lao, Lebanon, Macedonia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, Tonga & Kiribati, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam) and representatives from 11 OPDs (Women with Disabilities Development Foundation Bangladesh, National Council of Disabled Women Bangladesh, Lao Disabled People's Association, PALUMA – an OPD from Indonesia, Disability Service Center Lao, Can Tho Association of People with Disabilities Vietnam, Timor Leste Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan

(RHTO), Sri Lanka Foundation for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities of Ukraine (NAPD), The National Agency for Persons with Disabilities of Djibouti, and Together Foundation – an OPD from Albania) and a disability-focused organization – Centre for Disability in Development Bangladesh (CDD); (ii) a Review of the State of Disability Inclusion in UNDP’s Disaster Risk Reduction, Recovery and Resilience Building Initiatives developed in 2022 based on the analysis of 64 projects from 36 countries and interviews with 36 representatives of 13 UNDP Country Offices (Armenia, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Vanuatu and Sudan); (iii) and insights collected through a series of UNDP global events ([The future we create: How innovation can advance disability-inclusive development](#) – A Global UNDP Webinar for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, December 2022; UNDP Webinar on Disability-inclusive Communications, December 2021; UNDP Development Dialogue - [Changemakers in Action: Cutting-edge technologies for disability-inclusive early warning and preparedness](#), June 2021). The UNDP Policy Brief was finalized following an extensive peer review process which took place over a period of six weeks in June-July 2023. In total, 42 reviews were conducted, with a diverse range of stakeholders participating. The breakdown of reviewers included: six HQ practitioners, five regional practitioners, 21 practitioners from 14 UNDP Country Offices (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Georgia, Ghana, Indonesia, Libya, Lao, Nepal, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam), 10 practitioners from nine Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (the Cambodian Disabled People’s Organization, Ghana’s National Council on Persons with Disability, Lao Disabled People’s Association, Lao Disability Service Center, National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities of Ukraine, North Macedonia’s Polio Plus, North Macedonia’s Bravura Cooperativa, North Macedonia’s Association for Support of Persons with Cerebral Palsy in Veles and the International Disability Alliance).

¹³ The UNDP Signature Solutions are detailed in the [Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#).

¹⁴ [UN Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines](#) (2022).

¹⁵ [CRPD General comment No. 7](#) (2018) on the participation of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in the implementation and monitoring of the Convention.

¹⁶ [UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities](#) (2021).

¹⁷ For further information on using functioning approach in DRR and the Information/Action model please refer to the [Use of the Washington Group questions on disability in Disaster Risk Reduction: An Introduction](#). ASB Office for Indonesia and the Philippines Working Paper (2015).

¹⁸ For additional guidance on collection of disability data including the types of data to be collected for different purposes and key tools and recommended approaches please refer to the [Collection of data on disability inclusion in humanitarian action: Decision Tree](#). While designed for humanitarian action, this interagency resource could also be applied to DRR/recovery contexts.

¹⁹ WHO (2022). [The Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities](#).

²⁰ [www.accessiblesurveys.com](#) could be used by UNDP and its partners as an accessible online survey solution. This tool is unique in 1) the way it adapts to survey respondents’ preferences (without assuming these) and 2) the accessibility features it offers, such as the possibility to access questions in Sign Language videos, Easy to Read, read aloud mode, alongside other more ‘usual’ accessibility features (such as theme change, contrast adaptation, etc.). The app has been developed with guidance and testing from OPDs, in

partnership with IDA. A 'speech to text' to record audio answers is currently under development.

²¹ Adapted from the [UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities](#) (2021).

²² Adapted from the [IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#) (2019).

²³ United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) [website](#) and UNDIS [Annex 1](#). Key Concepts and Definitions.

²⁴ [Report of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group](#) (OEIWG) on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction.

²⁵ UNDIS [Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities](#) (2021).

²⁶ For further information on meaningful participation refer to the [CBM Inclusive Participation Toolbox](#).

²⁷ UNDIS [Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities](#) (2021).

²⁸ Based on the [CRPD General comment No. 7](#)

²⁹ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), [Article 1](#).

³⁰ [UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities](#) (2021).

³¹ [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy – Putting Words into Action](#), e-learning module.

³² [UNDRR terminology](#) (2017).



© UNDP Country Office in Jamaica