**Title: From global policies and guidelines to local engagement: how to include persons with disabilities in humanitarian action**

**Sponsors and Organizers: Australia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Mexico, Norway, Poland, UK, OCHA, UNICEF, OHCHR, UNHCR, IOM, International Disability Alliance (IDA), CBM, Humanity & Inclusion (HI), Women Refugee Commission (WRC)**

**Date and Time: Wednesday 26 June, 1:00 - 2:30 pm**

**Place: Room XXI, Palais des Nations, Geneva**

This is one of the side-events to be convened during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS), which builds on this year’s HAS theme**:** “*Promoting action to save lives, reach those in need and reduce humanitarian risk, vulnerability and need: looking towards the seventieth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the climate summit called for by the Secretary-General*”.

**Background and objectives**

Persons with disabilities continue to be among the most marginalized in any crisis-affected community: 80% live in poverty, and an estimated 10.3 million are forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict and human rights violations.[[1]](#footnote-1) In some cases, morbidity in disasters has been estimated at a rate two to four times higher than that of persons without disabilities, as are rates of instances of sexual violence and abuse for women and girls with disabilities. Humanitarian services are often not inclusive of persons with disabilities, which results in exclusion from aid.

Compounding this marginalization, persons with disabilities continue to be considered primarily as recipients of aid and charity, rather than agents of change. In order to achieve the aim of “leaving no-one behind”, a shift from vulnerability to resilience and a new way of thinking about how to address the needs and rights of persons with disabilities is required. Full inclusion and meaningful participation and consultation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations needs to happen in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment phases of humanitarian policies and programmes.

This session will be an opportunity to link policies and technical resources developed at a global level to case study examples from the field to operationalise inclusive humanitarian action for persons with disabilities. In particular, organizations of persons with disabilities involved in humanitarian aid and field technical experts from NGOs will be invited to speak to the need to include persons with disabilities in preparedness activities and participate in planning for early warning, evacuation, and response, and will share examples of localization and engagement of communities for a more inclusive and effective humanitarian response.

**Discussion points**

* Share insights on ongoing disability inclusive initiatives at a global level that are shaping the humanitarian landscape, such as development of the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) and its relevance for humanitarian action, the guidance on data for inclusion of persons with disabilities in Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), provisions under humanitarian financing;
* Share practical approaches to inclusive humanitarian action for persons with disabilities, based on the pilots undertaken and case studies collected in support to the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action;
* Build on speakers and participants’ knowledge and expertise of their own mandates and sectors to identify gaps and challenges to fulfill the global commitment to an inclusive humanitarian action for persons with disabilities.

**Key concrete action points and recommendations/take away messages**

* For participants to learn about key global commitments made, new and existing guidance and policies developed on inclusive humanitarian action for persons with disabilities
* Advance participants understanding on how new guidance and policies apply to them and how they could implement them
* Share key recommendation for all stakeholders to collectively build technical, financial and human resources to ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities, humanitarian organizations, UN agencies and governments have the capacity and knowledge to develop and implement humanitarian responses that are truly inclusive of persons with disabilities

**Format**

This event will be interactive, encouraging participants to share their knowledge and expertise on inclusive practices for persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, as well as gaps and challenges. States’ representatives will be very much encouraged to speak from the floor.

**Chair and moderator:**

* Chairs: Ms Elizabeth Wilde, Australian Deputy Ambassador, and UK Member State representatives (TBC)
* Moderator: Facundo Chávez Penillas, Human Rights Officer, OHCHR

**Panel composition:**

* Achayo Rose Obol, Board of Directors of National Union of Women with Disabilities of Uganda (NUWODU)
* Carissa Galla, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Advisor and Emergency Focal Person, Humanity & Inclusion Philippines
* Kirstin Lange, Protection Officer (Disability and Aging), UNHCR
* Michel Anglade, Director and UN Representative, Geneva Advocacy Office, Save the Children

**Background Material**

* Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action: <http://humanitariandisabilitycharter.org/>
* IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-team-inclusion-persons-disabilities-humanitarian-action>
* Background information: <http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/art11>

**Contact**

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1. Figures drawn from WHO *World Report on Disability* (2011) and UNHCR *Global Trends* *Report* (2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)