



ECOSOC HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS SEGMENT

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

21-23 June 2017

Title: Advancing the implementation of the WHS Charter and the development of the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Organizers: International Disability Alliance, Handicap International, IASC Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action
Sponsors: Finland, Australia, UK

Time and Date: Thursday 22 June, 13.15 - 14.45

Room (*TBC - will be provided by OCHA*), Palais des Nations, Geneva

This is one of the side-events to be convened during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, in keeping with this year's theme: *Restoring Humanity and Leaving No One Behind: Working together to reduce people's humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.*

Background and objectives

It is estimated that 15% of the world's population - about one billion people - are persons with disabilities. This population is disproportionately affected by humanitarian emergencies and is among the most marginalized in any crisis-affected community. Persons with disabilities face particular barriers in accessing life-saving relief and recovery support and are often denied opportunities to participate in the planning and implementation of humanitarian programs. Persons with disabilities often experience particular protection concerns, including increased exposure to targeted violence, exploitation and abuse, including sexual abuse and gender-based violence.

In order to recognize the rights of persons with disabilities and to transform humanitarian practice, a coalition of Member States, UN agencies, organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs), international organizations and civil society organizations launched a Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. The Charter is considered one of the key outcomes of the Summit, with endorsement from over 150 bodies comprising States, UN agencies, DPOs and civil society organizations. The Charter demonstrates a collective willingness to enhance the effective inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations across the humanitarian system. The Charter recalls the existing framework on disability inclusion, in particular the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its article 11 on situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies, as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction. A direct result of the Charter is the establishment of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, which will oversee the specific task of developing globally-endorsed IASC Guidelines. The Task Team

is co-led by UNICEF, the International Disability Alliance and Handicap International, with active participation of other agencies.

In line with the ECOSOC HAS objectives to leave no one behind, this event will be a key milestone to:

- Encourage ECOSOC HAS participants to contribute to this collective dynamic by discussing how to ensure the full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action
- Discuss current gaps in an emergency and look at collective ways forward, including by contributing to the development of the IASC guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action.

This event will be interactive, encouraging participants to share their knowledge and expertise on inclusive practices, as well as gaps and challenges towards persons with disabilities in the realization of inclusive humanitarian action. Participants may also wish to endorse the Charter during this event, hence sharing their commitment to promote inclusive humanitarian action for persons with disabilities.

Discussion points

Against this backdrop, the side-event will focus on the following suggested questions and discussion points:

1. *What are the current gaps and challenges you see to ensure the full and effective inclusion, and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian response?*
2. *What are the main successes and/or good practices you have experienced to ensure inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in your response?*
3. *What are the priorities areas to be addressed? What political and technical commitments would you like to make or expect from the international community?*

Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations

Increased understanding of the need to engage with persons with disabilities to promote their participation and inclusion in humanitarian action and be fully aware of the gaps and constraints in the humanitarian response.

Commitment from participants to engage and participate to the development of the Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action under the IASC Task Team.

Commitment from participants to support and implement the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

Format

The event is meant to show the human side of the issue, hence the panel is kept intentionally small and focused on persons from the field. A considerable amount of time will be kept for discussion among participants around the discussion points listed above. States' representatives will be very much encouraged to speak from the floor.

Chair and moderator:

- Catalina Devandas, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (TBC)

Panel composition:

- *Representatives of the International Disability Alliance (name TBC)*
- *Mrs Vivian Alt, humanitarian officer, Handicap International Iraq*
- *Representative of the IASC Task Team on inclusion of persons with disabilities*

Background Material

For more information on the charter: <http://humanitariandisabilitycharter.org/>

For more information on the IASC Task Team: <http://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-team-inclusion-persons-disabilities-humanitarian-action>

Contact

For more information, please contact:

(Add contact names, titles, affiliation, email and phone number)

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