**UN Enable Newsletter**

March 2016

The UN Enable Newsletter is prepared by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (DSPD/DESA) with input from UN offices, agencies, funds and programmes, as well as from civil society organizations, including organizations of persons with disabilities. It is also available online at: [www.un.org/disabilities](http://www.un.org/disabilities).

In this issue:

- Status of the CRPD

- News from UN Headquarters

   - World Humanitarian Summit

- News from other UN entities

- Calendar of international disability events

- Other news

**STATUS OF THE CRPD**

162 ratifications/accessions and 160 signatories to the CRPD

88 ratifications/accessions and 92 signatories to its Optional Protocol (OP)

**Update on the 9th session of the Conference of States Parties**

The 9th session of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) to the CRPD will be held from 14 to 16 June 2016 at UN Headquarters in New York. The overarching theme of this year's session is "Implementing the 2030 development agenda for all persons with disabilities: Leaving no one behind". The sub-themes are: i) Eliminating poverty and inequality for all persons with disabilities; ii) Promoting the rights of persons with mental and intellectual disabilities; iii) Enhancing accessibility to information and technology and inclusive development; and iv) Celebrating the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the CRPD. This year’s session will include a general debate, three thematic round table discussions. The online application for side-events, the application for new NGO Accreditation to the COSP and NGO and NHRI Registration is now open. Background documents and the provisional agenda will be posted shortly on the UN Enable website. (<http://bit.ly/crpdcosp9>)

**CRPD Committee elections**

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is composed of 18 independent experts. In accordance with article 34, paragraph 7, the term of nine of the members elected will expire on 31 December 2016. At this year’s COSP, the elections for nine members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to replace those whose terms are due to expire in December 2016. (<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/Elections2016.aspx>)

**NEWS FROM UN HEADQUARTERS**

**PGA meeting on the follow-up to the HLMDD**

The President of the UN General Assembly (PGA) will organise a panel discussion to follow up on the status of and progress made towards the realization of the development goals for persons with disabilities. The event will be organized in relation to the follow-up to the outcome of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development (HLMDD, 23 September 2013) and to the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as noted in General Assembly resolution 69/142. The panel discussion will take place on 13 June 2016 at UN Headquarters.

**Commemorating World Down Syndrome Day  at UN Headquarters**

On 21 March, the annual World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) Conference was held at UN Headquarters in New York. This year’s Conference highlighted the importance of including children and adults with Down syndrome in society and development, as well as the gains to be derived for them, their families, their communities and society, in general. In 2011, the UN General Assembly declared 21 March as World Down Syndrome Day (A/RES/66/149). The WDSD Conference was organized by Down Syndrome International and co-sponsored by the Permanent Missions of Australia, Brazil, India, Iran, Israel, Japan, Mongolia, Poland and Singapore, DESA and UNICEF, and the International Disability Alliance (IDA). Panellists included representatives of Government, UN agencies, experts, self-advocates, family members and friends with personal insight of inclusion within their communities, and other civil society participants. ([www.worlddownsyndromeday.org](http://www.worlddownsyndromeday.org))

**47th Statistical Commission agrees on 12 SDG indicators**

At its 47th session that concluded on 11 March, the UN Statistical Commission Disability agreed to 12 indicators related to measuring disability and the achievement of the SDGs for persons with disabilities (<http://bit.ly/statcomm-12sdg_indicators>). The indicators are included in goals 1, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16 and 17. During the session, a side-event was held on 10 March entitled: "Disability statistics and measurement: National experiences and opportunities for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". Convened in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme, the event highlighted national experiences on measurement of disability through censuses of the 2010 round. It also showcased work that is being carried out at the international level to improve the quality, relevance and availability of statistics on disability. Presentations delivered at the event are available at: <http://bit.ly/1TvV2rD>.  (<http://bit.ly/undisabilitystats>)

**60th Commission on the Status of Women agreed conclusions**

The 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) was held at UN Headquarters from 14-24 March 2016. The Agreed Conclusions on Women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development adopted on 24 March at the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) urge all stakeholders to take appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational, employment and other measures to protect and promote the rights of all women and girls with disabilities. This is with the goal of ensuring their full and effective participation and inclusion in society, and to address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination they face. Specific reference is made to education and training, social protection policies, including accessible and affordable quality social services, and care services. The advanced unedited text is available at: <http://bit.ly/1ozAK3z>.

**Side-event on women and girls with disabilities at CSW60**

DESA, in collaboration with UN Women and DFID, organized a side-event on women and girls with disabilities, entitled: "Operationalizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for Women and Girls with Disabilities". The multistakeholder discussion explored priority issues and specific goals for the realization of the SDGs for women and girls with disabilities, as well as discussed existing mechanisms to strengthen links between gender, disability and sustainable development. Panellists shared information on activities and actions to advance the rights and well-being of women and girls with disabilities in society and development. (<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/issues/women-and-girls-with-disabilities/csw60.html>)

**Silent Tears: Highlighting violence against women with disabilities**

The Silent Tears exhibition, featured at the 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), is a storytelling platform for women with disabilities who have been subjected to violence and women who have acquired disabilities as a result of violence. As part of the efforts to highlight the need to eliminate violence against women and girls, the Permanent Mission of Australia to the UN co-hosted the side-event to display the work of the Silent Tears project and talk about the intersections of culture, gender, disability and identity, and why gender-based violence is so difficult to resolve. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53543#.VvRjAOIrJpg>

**Have your say: UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment**

The High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment was established to provide recommendations for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to improve economic outcomes for women and promote women’s leadership in driving sustainable and inclusive, environmentally sensitive economic growth. Recommendations will include key actions that can be taken by governments, the private sector, the UN system and other stakeholders, as well as policy directives needed to achieve the new targets and indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals which call for the economic empowerment of women. Contribute to the online open discussion at: <https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/community/discussions/2016/03/have-your-say-un-secretary-general>

**WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT**

**DSPD/DESA Forum on Disability-Inclusive Humanitarian Action**

UN DSPD/DESA is organising a forum on disability-inclusive humanitarian action in Istanbul on 22 May 2016 in the lead up to the World Humanitarian Summit as a technical contribution to the special event on disability during the Summit. The Forum will provide a timely opportunity for decision-makers, experts, civil society and actors in humanitarian work to have an open and in-depth discussion on challenges and opportunities in advancing disability inclusive humanitarian action.  The Forum will also facilitate sharing of experiences and good practices, including by reviewing and building on lessons learned from the Sendai process and experiences in DiDRR, as well as existing disability-inclusive efforts at local, national and international levels. The Forum will offer an opportunity to discuss next steps in strengthening disability-inclusive humanitarian action. (<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/issues/whs.html>)

**IASG: Stakeholders to promote inclusion at World Humanitarian Summit**

An informal coalition of States, UN organizations as part of the Inter-Agency Support Group for the CRPD (IASG) and civil society organizations are collaborating to prepare for a Special Session on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action at the forthcoming World Humanitarian Summit to be held in Istanbul from 23-24 May 2016. The Special Session will serve as a forum to launch a Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. The Charter will galvanize political commitment to act and will be complemented by an action plan outlining key steps needed to achieve change. For more information, please contact: [disability.session@whsummit.org](mailto:disability.session@whsummit.org)  or for UN Agencies: Kirstin Lange, IASG/UNHCR: [lange@unhcr.org](mailto:lange@unhcr.org); NGOs/CSOs: Camille Gosselin, Handicap International: [cgosselin@handicap-international.org](mailto:cgosselin@handicap-international.org). (<https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org>)

**New UN Enable web resource on Migration and Disability**

Migration and displacement are important issues for both human rights and development policy-makers, and related practitioners. Migration refers to both voluntary movement (e.g. migrant workers) and involuntary movement (e.g. refugees) of women and men, across geographic borders internationally or internally, with the search for a better life. Although the international normative framework has broadly recognized the importance of addressing the needs of persons with disabilities in the fields of human rights and development, it has historically overlooked the subgroups within the disabled people in the context of migration, including migrant workers with disabilities and refugees with disabilities. This web resource draws attention to the status on migrants with disabilities and highlights the invisibility of migrants with disabilities in the international normative framework. (<http://bit.ly/1qq3mhj>)

**#Envision2030: 17 goals to transform the world for persons with disabilities**

In September 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Building on the principle of “leaving no one behind”, the new Agenda emphasizes a holistic approach to achieving sustainable development for all. The year 2016 marks the first year of the implementation of the SDGs. At this critical point, #Envision2030 will work to promote the mainstreaming of disability and the implementation of the SDGs throughout its 15-year lifespan. The public outreach campaign aims to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda and promote the achievement of the SDGs for persons with disabilities. It will also work to promote an active dialogue among stakeholders with a view to create a better world for persons with disabilities. It will continue to be an ongoing live web resource on each SDG and disability and includes information on related targets, indicators and other resources. The campaign invites all interested parties to share their vision of the world in 2030 that is fully inclusive of persons with disabilities. (<http://bit.ly/envision2030>)

**NEWS FROM OTHER UN ENTITIES**

**OHCHR - Special Rapporteur presents report to the Human Rights Council**

In her recent report to the Council (A/HRC/31/62), the Special Rapporteur, Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar, provides an overview of the activities undertaken since March 2015, as well as her thematic study on the right of persons with disabilities to participate in decision-making. The report includes the Special Rapporteur's country visits, conferences, meetings and engagement with stakeholders and communications, during the past year. In her thematic study she notes that the CRPD, which has currently been ratified by 162 countries, obliges States to consult closely with people with disabilities, recognizing their right to participate in all areas of public decision-making, not just those related to their disabilities. In her report, Ms. Devandas Aguilar urges all governments to engage in direct consultation with organizations of people with disabilities, rather than only those that advocate on their behalf. The Special Rapporteur stressed the importance of engaging with groups who need considerable support, such as persons with autism and those with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. Ms. Devandas Aguilar also raised concerns about the precarious situation of women and girls with disabilities, pointing out that in many places it is still unsafe for them to take part in open consultations. (<http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A%2FHRC%2F3>)

**UNICRI - Root causes of attacks against people with albinism: witchcraft and health**

On 22 February, experts met at the UN Headquarters in Geneva to discuss the root causes of the violent attacks and discrimination against people with albinism. The event was hosted by the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the UN independent expert on human rights of persons with albinism, Ms. Ikponwosa Ero. At the event, the expert panellists from the UN and civil society organizations presented findings from their work on the issues in affected communities. They highlighted the phenomenon of witchcraft, its characteristics as a harmful traditional or cultural practice, and the role it plays in spurring violations against people with albinism. Health issues related to persons with albinism and its correlation to discrimination and violence were also discussed. (<http://www.unicri.it/news/article/2016-03-07_Root_causes_of_attacks>)

**UNDP: National forum on vocational training for people with disabilities**

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Ministry of Textile Industry of Turkmenistan held National Forum to discuss the revision of the program of the 10 month vocational training courses of Textile College to accommodate the needs of the people with disabilities. The National Forum is held within the project “Enhancing social inclusion of people with disabilities through mainstreaming inclusive approach into the vocational trainings institutions” funded by the Government of Finland. The Forum was attended by the representatives of Parliament of Turkmenistan, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, the National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights under President of Turkmenistan, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Textiles, vocational training institutions of line ministries, public associations of Turkmenistan, UNDP development partners, representatives of the Finland MFA, national and international consultants. (<http://bit.ly/22cKRIV>)

**UN Women: Global Knowledge Platform to End Violence against Women**

The Global Knowledge Platform to End Violence against Women aims to improve knowledge and coordination among different actors to address violence against women more effectively. It consists of three individual websites: (a) Global Database on Violence against Women, (b) Inventory of United Nations Activities to End Violence against Women, and (c) Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls. These include prevalence data of violence against women, information regarding measures and actions taken by Governments and the UN system as well as knowledge-based policy and programming guidance. The Platform is available at: <http://evaw.unwomen.org/en>.

**UN Women: Global Gender Equality Constitutional Database**

The Global Gender Equality Constitutional Database, the first searchable database that specifically presents constitutional provisions through a gender lens, is a repository of gender equality related provisions extracted from 195 constitutions from around the world. Potential users and uses include Global and Regional Human Rights Treaty Bodies and National Independent Human Rights Bodies for monitoring compliance with national and international human rights standards, and Constitutional Courts and other judicial bodies for effective identification and citation of gender equality provisions and advancing gender equality constitutional jurisprudence. The database is available at: <http://constitutions.unwomen.org/en>.

**UNESCO: Changing attitudes about the blind and technology use in Kenya**

As part of UNESCO's Mobile Learning Week (MLW) held from 7-11 March, innovative practices in the use of ICTs in Education were highlighted, such as the InABLE programme that aims not only to empower blind and visually impaired students in Africa with computer assistive technology, but to change the opinion of the sighted world about people with visual impairments and their use of technology. The InABLE programme works with Kenya’s special schools for blind and has 1400 students on the programme learning about and through tablet devices with screen readers and large type. They aim to enable blind and visually impaired children successfully go through school and into work, to give them lifelong skills, thus enabling them to become productive members of society whether in academia or as entrepreneurs. (<http://bit.ly/1q6RekX>)

**World Bank:  Girls’ Clubs Having ‘Big and Meaningful’ Impacts on Young Women’s Empowerment**

Recent studies by researchers from the World Bank’s Africa Gender Innovation Lab, the London School of Economics, Bocconi University, University College London, show that the girls' clubs’ offer a safe haven for young women amid high rates of youth unemployment, teen pregnancy and early marriage, as well as work to improve young women’s ability to earn an income and delay marriage and childbearing. The research is helping design programs that empower girls and young women socially and economically. Furthermore, the emphasis on teaching “life skills” covering such topics as sex education, leadership, negotiation, sexual and reproductive health, gender and “bride price” or dowry, enable young women to take care of themselves and know their rights. The clubs are run by BRAC Uganda, a branch of the Bangladesh-based international organization, BRAC, known for its efforts to empower poor people, especially women. Their 1,505 clubs in Uganda offer games, music, sex education, financial literacy, vocational training, and access to microfinance for young women trying to become entrepreneurs. (<http://bit.ly/1SQiJsy>)

**CALENDAR OF INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY EVENTS**

Please send us information on major international disability events, for possible inclusion in the list below, to [enable@un.org](mailto:enable@un.org). Now also available on the UN Enable website at <http://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/calendar.html>.

**2016**

11 to 13 April: 9th World Assembly of Disabled People's International (DPI), New Delhi, India

(<http://www.dpiworldassembly2016.com/>)

25 to 26 April: Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity, Hawaii

([www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/](http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/))

25 to 27 April: VIII Latin-American Congress of the Blind, Montevideo

([www.ulacdigital.org/montevideo2016](http://www.ulacdigital.org/montevideo2016))

22 May: DESA Public Forum on Disability-Inclusive Humanitarian Action, Istanbul, Turkey

(<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/issues/whs.html>)

23 to 24 May: World Humanitarian Summit, Istanbul, Turkey

([www.worldhumanitariansummit.org](http://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org))

25 May: Meeting of the UN Inter-Agency Support Group to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

(<http://bit.ly/crpd-iasg>)

13 June: International Albinism Awareness Day

([www.un.org/en/events/albinismday/](http://www.un.org/en/events/albinismday/))

13 to 14 June 2016: M-Enabling Summit, Washington, D.C., USA

(<http://www.m-enabling.com/>)

13 June: Follow-up to the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development

14 to 16 June: 9th session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD

(<http://bit.ly/crpdcosp9>)

25 to 27 July: Habitat III - 3rd session of the Preparatory Committee, Jakarta, Indonesia

(<https://www.habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/preparatory-committee>)

18 to 25 August: IX General Assembly of the World Blind Union

([www.worldblindunion.org/English/general-assembly/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.worldblindunion.org/English/general-assembly/Pages/default.aspx))

7 to 18 September: 2016 Paralympic Games, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

(<http://www.paralympic.org/rio-2016>)

27 to 29 September 2016: 2nd CBR World Congress, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

(<http://www.2ndcbrworldcongress.com/>)

16 October: DESA Forum on Accessible and Disability Inclusive Urban Development, Quito, Ecuador

([www.un.org/disabilities](http://www.un.org/disabilities))

17 to 20 October: Habitat III, UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Quito, Ecuador

([www.habitat3.org](http://www.habitat3.org))

25 to 27 October: 23rd Rehabilitation International (RI) World Congress, Edinburgh, UK

(<http://www.riglobal.org/save-the-date-ri-world-congress-2016>)

3 December: International Day of Persons with Disabilities

(<http://bit.ly/undisabilityidpd>)

8 to 10 November 2017, 3rd International Conference of the World Federation of the Deaf, Budapest, Hungary

([golob@congressline.hu](mailto:golob@congressline.hu), <http://wfdbudapest2017.com>)

**OTHER NEWS**

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**DPI's 9th World Assembly to celebrate the “10 Glorious Years of CRPD”**

The 9th World Assembly of Disabled People’s International (DPI) will be held in New Delhi, India from 11 to 13 April 2016 under the theme: “Building Human Capital – Realizing SDGs for People with Disabilities”. Over 200 leaders with disabilities from more than 70 countries are expected to participate, along with government officials, UN representatives, and other CSOs. Notable speakers include Ambassador Luis Gallegos, Yuri Afanasiev, Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, Venus Ilagan, Axel Leblois, Mukhtar Al-Shibani, Shuaib Chalklen – the former Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development, Richard Rieser, Shanaaz Majiet, James Thurston, Senarath Attanayake and Shilpi Kapoor, among others.  The Regional Assemblies of DPI Asia-Pacific and DPI Africa will also take place on the side-lines. (<http://www.dpiworldassembly2016.com/>)

**EDF-ACI Accessible Airport Awards**

The European Disability Forum (EDF) in collaboration with Airports Council International – Europe (ACI-Europe) is organizing “Accessible Airport Awards” that are accepting applications until 29 April. The award aim at honouring the most accessible airport for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility, as well as encouraging airports to remove the barriers that persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility still face when travelling by air. “Accessibility” in the context of this award does not only mean physical accessibility for wheelchair users but for all persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility. It concerns the built environment and transport (e.g. the terminals and surrounding infrastructure) as well as information and communication (e.g. signage, websites, flight announcements, check-in, etc.). The criteria include questions on the airport premises, the processes including the assistance services for persons with reduced mobility, and the service quality. Airports in the EU, big or small, can apply to be honoured as the most accessible airport according to these criteria. The winner will be selected by a jury consisting of EDF members and the European Commission. Deadline 29 April 2016. (<http://www.edf-feph.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=22112&thebloc=34430>)

**DRAF grantees help pass Indonesia’s Persons with Disabilities Act**

Four years following Indonesia's ratification of the CRPD, the disability movement is celebrating a new win. On March 17, 2016, the Persons with Disabilities Act was passed in Indonesia. The new bill adopts a human rights approach that complies with the CRPD. This is a significant political and social milestone for Indonesia's 36 million people with disabilities. DRAF notes that the team behind this major legislative reform includes: Center for Election Access for Citizens with Disabilities (PPUA Penca), the Center for Indonesian Law and Policy Studies (PSHK), the Indonesian Association of Women with Disabilities (HWDI) and the Indonesian Association for Mental Health. With support from the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund (DRF's sister fund), the coalition was led mainly by women with disabilities who helped draft the legislation and conducted related advocacy for over two years. (<http://www.disabilityrightsfund.org/>)

**Zero Project 2016 - Report and Conference**

This year´s Zero Project Report 2016 gathered valuable data on the situation of persons with disabilities. Looking at 30 social indicators, the report provides a detailed picture of the implementation of the CRPD in 129 countries. Moreover, more than 3,000 people participated in the nomination of Innovative Practices and Policies, with about 150 experts from the Zero Project’s global network. The Zero Project Conference 2016, convened by the Essl Foundation, the World Future Council and the European Foundation Centre at the United Nations Office in Vienna, Austria was held from 10-12 February 2016. The Conference included more than 500 innovators from more than 70 countries and highlighted 98 Innovative Policies and Innovative Practices concerning Inclusive Education and/or ICTs from around the world. The Conference included 35 plenary sessions and workshops, and also included an exhibition. Download the “Zero Project Report 2016: Barrier Free” from the Zero Project’s website. The theme of the 2017 report and conference will be employment that also calls for nominations. (<http://zeroproject.org>; [office@zeroproject.org](mailto:office@zeroproject.org))

**Heidi Latsky Dance IDPD Call to action ON DISPLAY**

To commemorate the International Day for Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) Heidi Latsky Dance (HLD) has created an artful representation of the day in the form of a sculpture court of living sculptures called ON DISPLAY that would celebrate diversity and engender a spirit of action for equality. For IDPD on 3 December 2016, HLD is seeking Ambassadors - groups, individuals, and organizations - who will coordinate installations of ON DISPLAY in their city. To successfully do this, an Ambassador will need to organize: a cast of physically diverse people that must include people with physical disabilities; an accessible and public space to set the installation; a director (from theatre or dance) who  can ensure the installation maintains the artistic values of HLD; two installations of ON DISPLAY- one before October 2016 that can be filmed and sent to HLD to be part of the Global webpage to be shown on Friday, 2 December at the UN and then at partner sites Saturday, 3 December, and one on December 3rd to celebrate the day alongside the worldwide network of partners. All are welcome to join in this initiative. Submit an application to become an Ambassador for this movement. <http://heidilatskydance.com/on-display/>; ON DISPLAY Application:

<http://goo.gl/forms/8kUm6Sa2Wu>.

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Twitter: <http://twitter.com/UN_Enable>

Website: [www.un.org/disabilities](http://www.un.org/disabilities)

Email: [enable@un.org](mailto:enable@un.org)

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