The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – pocket version

This Convention specifies universal human rights as they apply to the situation of persons with disabilities around the world.

Article 32 of the Convention calls on the States Parties to ensure that their development cooperation is also inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities. In response, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has adopted an Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in German development cooperation.

As a ‘quick reference guide’, this pocket version of the Convention is intended to provide experts working in German development cooperation with ideas as to how they can better take the rights of persons with disabilities into account in their everyday work.

Every one of the following cards presents facts and figures, examples and options for action relating to an article of the Convention. On the back of the card, you will find the relevant article in a brief and easy-to-read form.

This pocket version demonstrates the relevance of the individual articles of the Convention in a wide spectrum of fields covered by development cooperation. It cannot, however, replace the actual wording of the Convention and does not claim to be exhaustive. Its purpose is simply to encourage readers to take a closer look at the Convention.
### UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Articles:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Definitions (not included)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 General principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 General obligations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Equality and non-discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Women with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Children with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Awareness-raising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Right to life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Equal recognition before the law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Access to justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Liberty and security of the person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Protecting the integrity of the person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Liberty of movement and nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Living independently and being included in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Personal mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Respect for privacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Respect for home and the family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Habilitation and rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Work and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Adequate standard of living and social protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Participation in political and public life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Statistics and data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 International cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 National implementation and monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34–50 Implementation, monitoring and reporting (Overview not dealt with in more detail)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The project ‘Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities’

BMZ commissioned the project ‘Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities’ in order to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the concepts, strategies and programmes of German development cooperation. The project team is thus a service provider for all aspects of inclusion in development cooperation. It advises both BMZ and the implementing organisations at various levels – in their work inside Germany and in partner countries.

Project responsibilities and services:

- policy and strategy development;
- awareness-raising, orientation, specialised consultancy;
- cooperation at operational level;
- knowledge management and the development of appropriate methods.

The expertise of the project ‘Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities’ is offering advice on how to make your projects and programmes as well as your conceptual work, inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities. Make the most of the services available!

### Contact

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Article 1
Purpose

‘Making sure the label fits’

One billion persons currently live with some form of disability, around 110 to 190 million of whom have significant difficulties in functioning. Eighty per cent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries. The Convention is based on a social model of disability, and assumes that a disability is not the result of a physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment alone, but instead evolves in the interaction with barriers within society.

The purpose of this Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Persons with disabilities include those who have physical, mental, 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.
Article 3
General principles

‘Shaping our society together’

Respect for human rights, equality of opportunities, participation and non-discrimination are the cornerstones of a society shaped jointly by all of its members. It is not only physical barriers, but more importantly the barriers in our heads that make life such a challenge for persons with disabilities, day in day out. All individuals should have the opportunity to participate equally in society, according to the general principles laid out in Article 3, which form the foundation of this Convention. Development cooperation measures too can only be appropriate and effective if they fully embrace these principles.

Inviolable principles exist for the protection and respect of the human rights of persons with disabilities. All the provisions of the Convention must be seen in the light of these principles:

- respect for human dignity;
- individual autonomy – freedom to decide and make one’s own choices;
- non-discrimination;
- full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- acceptance of the various limitations as part of individual diversity;
- equality of opportunity;
- accessibility;
- equality between men and women;
- respect for the own identity of children with disabilities and for their evolving capacities.

Photo: © GIZ/Donal Husni
Article 4
General obligations

‘Make inclusion a reality’

Persons with disabilities establish their own organisations and networks around the world and articulate their own rights and concerns as experts in their field. One of the central demands made of States Parties is that they consult and involve the representative organisations of persons with disabilities in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development programmes. Development cooperation should ensure that these organisations are also actively involved in policy-making processes as equal partners.

The States Parties undertake to ensure and promote the full realisation of all human rights for all persons with disabilities without discrimination.

- Legislative and administrative measures must comply with the Convention. To this end existing laws should be modified, customs and practices reviewed, and policies and programmes adjusted or new ones developed.
- Research and development of technologies suitable for persons with disabilities is to be promoted and information on available assistive technologies more widely distributed.
- Training for professionals working with persons with disabilities is to be promoted.
- The economic, cultural and social rights covered by the Convention are to be realised progressively using all available resources and within the framework of international cooperation.
- Persons with disabilities and their organisations are to be consulted and actively involved in all implementation processes.
Article 5
Equality and non-discrimination

‘Equality is the key’

Frequently people face discrimination as a result of their impairments. Around the world, barriers - intentional or unintentional - prevent them from gaining equal access to important institutions within society, including schools, training, gainful employment and starting their own family. Development cooperation actors are called on to design measures that encourage equal participation and assist in overcoming discrimination.

- All persons are equal before and under the law.
- All discrimination on the basis of disability is prohibited and effective legal protection against discrimination has to be guaranteed.
- Appropriate steps* are to be taken to promote equality and eliminate discrimination.

*Appropriate steps ... means necessary and suitable modifications and adjustments taken as required to ensure that persons with disabilities can enjoy all human rights and exercise all fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others.
‘Women’s rights are human rights and human rights are women’s rights’

Women with disabilities living in developing countries are subject to multiple discrimination as a result of their disabilities and their gender. They are more frequently excluded within their social environment and face higher risks of sexual abuse and HIV infection. The internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can only be achieved if women with disabilities are enabled, by means of targeted empowerment activities, to make use of and actively demand their rights.

States Parties undertake ...
- to enable women and girls with disabilities to fully and equally enjoy their human rights, and
- to devise programmes and strategies to empower* girls and women.

*Empowerment ... is the term used to describe strategies and measures intended to raise the level of autonomy of individuals or societies and to give them the freedom to take charge of their own lives, allowing them to stand up (again) for their own interests independently, and in a self-determined fashion.
‘Human rights have no age limit – but need to be protected’

It is estimated that over 90 per cent of all children with disabilities in developing countries have no access to supportive measures or to education. They also face a particularly high risk of living in poverty. To break this vicious circle of disability and poverty, the human rights of children with disabilities must be taken into account and accorded special protection. This also means that the rights of children may not be inadmissibly restricted on the grounds of specific vulnerability. All children must be involved in decision-making processes that affect them.

- Children with disabilities must be able to enjoy all human rights on an equal basis with other children.
- The child’s best interests must be a primary consideration.
- Children with disabilities must be involved in all processes and institutions that affect them, for instance in policy-making bodies. They have the right to express their views freely on an equal basis with other children. Their views must be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.
- Children with disabilities must be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realise that right.
‘Those who are aware, can change things!’

It is rare to find positive reports about the abilities of persons with disabilities and the contributions they make to society. They are often presented as dependent, passive, deserving sympathy, and are thus perceived like this by society. Genuine participation can only be achieved if all people are recognised for their abilities and valued. To prevent barriers in the mind become barriers in the life of persons with disabilities, education and awareness-raising are vital, both in partner countries and within development organisations.

The States Parties are responsible for developing effective measures including campaigns and training, in order to ...

• raise awareness throughout society regarding the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, and to ensure they are treated respectfully;
• combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities;
• promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions to society of persons with disabilities;
• encourage the media to portray persons with disabilities with respect.
‘Dismantling barriers and building justice’

It is not only access to the physical environment that is often blocked by barriers. If information is not available, for instance in Braille, pictograms or sign language, it can be difficult for persons with disabilities to participate in important parts of everyday life, including health care and the education system. A universal design that allows all people to use a product or environment need not be expensive or difficult to realise, even in developing countries. International organisations in particular are called upon to develop, disseminate and establish global standards on accessibility. Compliance with such standards must become a quality standard and a prerequisite for funding.

The States Parties are responsible for ensuring accessibility of:

- infrastructure including roads and transportation;
- information and communication technologies;
- public facilities and services including schools and hospitals;
- all facilities and services that are open or provided to the public, such as bank branches.

In line with the provisions of this Article, standards and guidelines are to be introduced for the public and private sector, and live assistance and other forms of assistance made available.
‘Recognising diversity, living together’

The mortality rates of children with disabilities can be as high as 80 per cent around the world, even in countries in which child mortality among the under-five age group is lower than 20 per cent. Often, children with disabilities do not receive the same care as other children. Frequently they are not given access to life-preserving health services. The right to life is often denied, regularly even before they are born.

Development cooperation must help ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to all necessary services in order to secure their right to life and to ensure that they can live in dignity in the mainstream.

Photo: © CBM/Iris Bothe
Article 11
Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies

‘Forewarned is forearmed?!’

When disaster strikes, persons with disabilities are particularly at risk, for instance through disorientation, loss of important aids or appliances, or lack of the individuals they rely on for support. The situation is compounded by the lack of accessibility of care and rescue systems. Identifying risks thus always means taking persons with disabilities into account in disaster risk management to ensure protection and security for all persons affected.

In situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters, persons with disabilities need special protection. In particular their rights to food, water, health and safe accommodation must be ensured in such situations.
Article 12
Equal recognition before the law

‘So who’s right?’

Persons with disabilities are often deprived of their rights or declared legally incapable. This is particularly true of individuals with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities. Quite often they do not receive appropriate remuneration for the work they perform, are not allowed to handle their money independently, and are barred from access to financial services such as micro-loans. If persons with disabilities are to exercise their rights, they must be recognised as having these rights in the first place.

Persons with disabilities have rights and responsibilities. They are able to exercise their rights independently and are provided with the necessary support, respectively.

It must be ensured that the will of persons with disabilities is safeguarded against abuse. To this end, the support provided is subject to regular review by a competent independent authority.

Persons with disabilities have the same right as other people to own or inherit property and to control their own financial affairs. They must be guaranteed equal access to financial services.

Photo: © GIZ & Handicap Int./Antoine Vincens de Tapol
Article 13
Access to justice

‘That’s only half the story’

Persons with disabilities find it difficult to gain access to justice and are often not accepted as witnesses. Persons with communication difficulties in particular are seriously disadvantaged when they are refused access to court proceedings because the support they need is not available. To ensure that the whole truth comes out in judicial procedures, the representative organisations of persons with disabilities must be supported in their efforts to assert the rights of persons with disabilities, and police and staff of the judiciary must be sensitised to the needs of persons with disabilities.

Judicial proceedings are to be designed so that persons with disabilities can participate. To this end police and staff working in the field of administration of justice are to be sensitised to the needs of persons with disabilities.
Article 14
Liberty and security of person

‘Liberty – sure!’

Around the world, persons with disabilities are often placed in institutions against their will. The mere existence of a disability can never justify depriving a person of their liberty. Persons with disabilities must be able to decide independently where and how they wish to live. They are entitled to as much support as they need, without disempowering them or restricting their liberty.

Persons with disabilities enjoy the following rights on an equal basis with others:

- the right to liberty of person;
- the right to security of person;
- protection from any arbitrary or unlawful deprivation of liberty; the existence of a disability can in no case justify a deprivation of liberty.

If persons with disabilities are deprived of their liberty through any rule-of-law process, it must be ensured that this is in compliance with the objectives and principles of this Convention and all other human rights standards. In case of deprivation of liberty, the needs of persons with disabilities must be reasonably accommodated.
Article 15
Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

‘Creating awareness, promoting humanity’

Media around the world constantly report on inhuman treatment and scandalous living conditions experienced by persons with disabilities. Even today persons with disabilities are frequently subjected to medical interventions or scientific studies against their will or without their explicit consent. Development cooperation is therefore called on to help protect them against inhuman treatment and to devise measures to sensitise civil society to the situation of persons with disabilities.

The States Parties guarantee that ...
- no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- no one shall be subjected without his or her free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.
Article 16
Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse

‘Take preventive action and make a difference’

Women with disabilities are more frequently victims of sexual and physical abuse than women without disabilities, as perpetrators have a lower inhibition threshold in their case and as they might not be in a position to resist violence or use the protection offered by the law. Men with disabilities too experience economic exploitation, violence and abuse. Development cooperation can and must help to prevent this. Projects and programmes can help partner governments to bring their legal systems into line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to take steps to ensure that equal treatment of persons with disabilities is written into policy strategies and social standards.

Persons with disabilities must be protected, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, particularly including gender-based aspects.

The States Parties shall take all appropriate measures ...

- to ensure that all facilities designed to serve persons with disabilities are monitored by independent authorities;
- to promote rehabilitation and social reintegration measures including the provision of protection services;
- to provide preventive services and follow-up care for persons with disabilities, their families and care-givers;
- to provide information on how to avoid, recognise and prosecute instances of violence;
- to develop effective legislation and policies to ensure that instances of exploitation, violence and abuse against persons with disabilities are identified, investigated and prosecuted.
Article 17
Protecting the integrity of the person

‘My body belongs to me’

Persons with disabilities are frequently sterilised without their consent. Various competing interests are given higher priority than their right to make their own choices. Everyone must have the right to decide what happens to their own body, because everyone has a right to physical integrity. Forced sterilisation violates this right. The establishment of reporting mechanisms can help implement bans of this sort.
Persons with disabilities often live hidden away and segregated from society. They are frequently not registered at birth, have no identity papers, no official nationality and are thus restricted in their liberty of movement. They are also excluded from democratic processes including elections, which would require them to be in possession of official identity papers. In order for persons with disabilities to be able to move freely and enjoy their civil liberties equally with others, they must be issued with the requisite identity papers.

Children with disabilities have the right to be registered by name immediately after birth, to be cared for by their parents and to acquire a nationality.

Article 18
Liberty of movement and nationality

‘No papers, limited chances’

Persons with disabilities have the right to liberty of movement and to freedom to choose their place of residence. They have the right to acquire and change a nationality, and to be protected against being arbitrarily deprived of their nationality. They also have the right...

- to obtain, possess and use documentation of their nationality or other documentation of identification;
- to utilise processes such as immigration proceedings to exercise the right to liberty of movement;
- to leave any country, including their own, at any time, and to enter their own country on an equal basis with others.

Children with disabilities have the right to be registered by name immediately after birth, to be cared for by their parents and to acquire a nationality.
Article 19
Living independently and being included in the community

‘Personal assistance for an independent life within the community’

In some countries support services are only available to persons with disabilities if they live in dedicated facilities. People living independently are excluded from these services. If persons with disabilities are to be part of society, they must be able to decide freely how they wish to live.

Support services must not be tied solely to institutions. Ambulatory, community-based, flexible services that respond to the individual needs of persons with disabilities must be available.

The States Parties recognise the equal right of persons with disabilities to live in the community with choices equal to others.

- Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose freely where and with whom they live.
- They are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement, such as an institution.
- In-home support services and personal assistance are to support living and inclusion in the community and to prevent isolation.
- Community facilities and services must be responsive to their needs.
Article 20
Personal mobility

‘If you’re mobile, you can get things moving!’

In many developing countries mobility aids are scarce. In some countries none at all are produced. Guide dog training or training for mobility specialists is frequently inadequate. Mobility plays a crucial part in gaining access to training, an income and health services, and dramatically raises the living standard of persons with disabilities. By fostering the availability of mobility support, development cooperation can also help reduce poverty.

The States Parties are responsible for ensuring the personal mobility of persons with disabilities. They take measures to...

- facilitate the personal mobility of persons with disabilities at affordable cost;
- facilitate access by persons with disabilities to mobility aids, including wheelchairs, guide dogs and live assistance;
- provide an adequate range of training in mobility skills to persons with disabilities and to specialist staff working with persons with disabilities;
- encourage producers of mobility aids to take into account all aspects of mobility for persons with disabilities.
Article 21
Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information

‘You need information to join in discussions’

In low-income countries in particular, information intended for the general public is often not available in a form that is accessible to all. Persons with disabilities are thus systematically excluded from access to information and from passing on such information. Braille, sign language and easy language must be recognised as acceptable forms of communication. In development cooperation too, we can only be sure of reaching the entire target group if information is disseminated in these different forms.

The States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise their right to freedom of expression and opinion on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice, including by ...

- providing information intended for the general public in accessible formats in a timely manner and without additional cost;
- accepting the use of all accessible forms of communication and making it easier to use at public authorities;
- encouraging the mass media and private service providers to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities.
Article 22
Respect for privacy

‘That’s none of your business!’

Health and support services often disregard the privacy of persons with disabilities. Facilities serving persons with disabilities in particular often have structures that interfere with the privacy of these people and violate their dignity. Within the scope of development cooperation too, all projects and programmes must ensure the protection of privacy.

Persons with disabilities must be protected against unlawful interference with their privacy, family, home and communication. The privacy of their personal, health and rehabilitation information must be protected on an equal basis with others.
Article 23
Respect for home and the family

‘Parenthood is not a privilege’

The common misconception that persons with disabilities are not sexually active often results in a lack of adequate health services offered for persons with disabilities in terms of sexuality and family planning. Health sector staff in particular must realise that persons with disabilities have a right to sexuality and to found a family, and to all other health services.

The States Parties shall take effective measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships.

They guarantee persons with disabilities ...

- the right of persons of marriageable age to marry and found a family;
- the right to decide freely on the number of their children;
- access to information about reproduction and family planning and all the necessary aids;
- special protection of their fertility;
- the right of persons with disabilities to exercise all rights and responsibilities relating to parenthood.

In no case shall a child be separated from its parents, especially not on the basis of a disability of either the child or one or both of the parents. They and their families must be provided with early and comprehensive information, services and support in order to prevent children with disabilities being neglected or segregated.
‘*If education is a must, then it is a must for all!*’

It is estimated that 90 per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school. Girls are particularly disadvantaged. Development cooperation education programmes must offer support services geared to people’s very different needs so as to ensure equal access to general education for all.

Persons with disabilities have the same right to education as all others. Therefore, an inclusive education system and lifelong learning has to be ensured. All education must develop a sense of self-worth, support personal development and enable individuals to participate fully in society.

In particular the States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities ...  

- are not excluded from the general education system on the grounds of their disability;
- can access an inclusive, quality primary and secondary education;
- can acquire life and social skills (e.g. Braille, sign language, orientation and mobility skills);
- are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning on an equal basis with others;
- find reasonable accommodation for their individual education needs.
Persons with disabilities have the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health, without discrimination.

The States Parties undertake to guarantee

- the same range and quality of free or affordable health care that is available to other patients;
- accessibility of sexual and reproductive health services and rehabilitation;
- all health services needed by persons with disabilities specifically because of their impairment, including prevention and follow-up care.

These services must be provided as close as possible to people’s own communities. Where health insurance and life insurance schemes exist, they must be available on fair terms to persons with disabilities. Discrimination of any sort in this respect must be prohibited.
Article 26
Habilitation and rehabilitation

‘Independence depends on many factors’

Medical care and rehabilitation services still reach only a tiny percentage of persons with disabilities in developing countries. In Africa, Asia and Latin America some 180,000 rehabilitation professionals are wanting. The drastic shortages of rehabilitation professionals prevent persons with disabilities from developing their full physical, mental, social and vocational abilities. By specifically training specialists and providing services at community level, development cooperation can foster the independence of persons with disabilities and enable them to participate.

The States Parties undertake to organise comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services in the fields of health, employment, education and social services. The aim is to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence and full physical, mental, social and vocational ability.

The services should also ...
- begin at the earliest possible stage;
- be voluntary and offered as close as possible to people’s own communities;
- strengthen participation in society;
- underpin peer support.

The States Parties shall promote the training of pertinent professionals and the availability of assistive technologies.
Article 27
Work and employment

‘Everybody has the right to work!’

The right to work is an elementary human right. Persons with disabilities are more likely to be poor because they are unable to earn a living independently. This is not because of their lack of abilities. The lack of vocational training, support and accessibility prevent them from finding employment. If persons with disabilities are to ensure their own livelihood, they must have access to the labour market, equal opportunities, adequate working conditions, and they must earn the same wage for the same work as other people.

Persons with disabilities have the right to work on an equal basis with others. This includes the right to gain a living in a labour market and work environment that is open and inclusive. The States Parties shall ...

- prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning employment;
- protect the equal rights of persons with disabilities to fair, safe and healthy working conditions as well as the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value;
- ensure that persons with disability are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights;
- enable persons with disabilities to access vocational and continuing training and job placement services;
- promote opportunities for self-employment and entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities;
- provide reasonable accommodation to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities are taken into account at the workplace;
- promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sector as well as vocational rehabilitation programmes;
- prohibit all forms of forced labour.
Article 28
Adequate standard of living and social protection

‘Making life the standard!’

Persons with disabilities often face substantially higher costs than those without disabilities to achieve a comparable standard of living. Their needs must then be taken into special account in social welfare systems – not with a view to giving them hand-outs, but merely to offset the additional costs they face and thus enable them to participate.

Persons with disabilities have the same rights as all other people to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and the continuous improvement of living conditions.

They also enjoy the same right to social protection without discrimination. The States Parties shall protect and realise these rights by ensuring that persons with disabilities have ...

- equal access to provision of clean water;
- access to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes; this applies in particular to women, girls and elderly persons with disabilities;
- access to assistance from the state with disability-related expenses;
- access to public housing programmes;
- equal access to retirement benefits and programmes.
Article 29
Participation in political and public life

‘If you can’t vote, you’ve lost before the race starts!’

In many countries persons with disabilities are directly and indirectly barred from participation in political life. Electoral legislation often discriminates against persons with disabilities. Access, for instance, to polling stations or accessible electoral campaigns and other information is largely unknown. Policies which are responsive to the concerns of persons with disabilities require the active participation of persons with disabilities. Therefore, development cooperation is obliged to systematically promote the active participation of persons with disabilities in political processes.

Persons with disabilities enjoy the same political rights as others. The States Parties undertake to ensure that they can participate in political and public life, directly or through freely chosen representatives. This applies quite particularly to the right and opportunity to vote and be elected.

- Voting procedures, facilities and materials must be accessible.
- Persons with disabilities must be able to hold every public office. The assistance they need must be made available to them.
- Persons with disabilities must be able to effectively participate in the conduct of all public affairs. Their participation in parties and non-governmental organisations and in founding representative organisations is to be promoted.
Article 30
Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

‘In the thick of it – not on the side lines’

A wide variety of barriers prevent persons with disabilities from participating in cultural life. They are often unable to enjoy or access television, films, theatres, museums, leisure and sporting activities and cultural facilities. If all people are able to develop and use their creative, artistic and intercultural potential, this will enrich society as a whole. To this end the participation of persons with disabilities in cultural life must be promoted.

Persons with disabilities have the same rights as others to participate in cultural life. To this end the States Parties shall ...

- ensure that television channels and films offer audio descriptions and sign language;
- enable persons with disabilities to access and enjoy cinemas, theatres, museums, libraries, monuments and other cultural facilities;
- foster their cultural identity and language, such as sign language and deaf culture, as well as encouraging the creative and cultural participation of persons with disabilities;
- facilitate accessible tourism, leisure and sporting activities by ensuring access to sporting, recreational and leisure venues;
- develop, organise and disseminate mainstream recreational sporting activities and disability-specific sports;
- give children with disabilities access to playgrounds and other recreational pursuits as well as to school sporting activities.
Article 31
Statistics and data collection

‘Knowledge generates quality’

There are many different reasons and causes for the segregation of persons with disabilities, and it is not always easy to understand them clearly. Often it is not because society lacks the will to ensure their comprehensive participation, but because it does not know about the type of barriers that exist and the way persons with disabilities really live.

Alongside national data, the systematic gathering and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative knowledge on the part of development organisations form the basis for a more inclusive design of development measures and national policies. This is the only way in which development measures can meet their obligations under the provisions of this Convention and help improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities.

The States Parties undertake to collect appropriate information, including statistical and research data, to enable them to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the present Convention. When collecting and processing this data, the statutory protection of human rights and liberties must be guaranteed as must relevant ethical principles.

The data collected make the specific commitments arising from this Convention visible and provide a foundation for appropriate action to be taken.

The States Parties are responsible for the dissemination of these statistics and ensure their accessibility to persons with disabilities and others.

Photo: © GIZ/Donal Husni
Article 32
International cooperation

‘Development is for everybody’

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the first human rights convention to lay out specific standards for international cooperation. There is thus an obligation to make development cooperation inclusive. This entails both specific programmes to support persons with disabilities and the inclusion of their rights in all development measures.

The States Parties undertake to include the concerns of persons with disabilities in their international cooperation and to ensure that cooperation is inclusive. They will undertake appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among partner countries. Special importance is attached to cooperation with international and regional organisations, but especially with the relevant parts of civil society, in particular organisations of persons with disabilities.

Such measures could include

- capacity-building, information and sharing of experiences and training programmes;
- facilitating cooperation in the field of research and the transfer of assistive technologies;
- technical and scientific assistance.

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Article 33
National implementation and monitoring

‘Fostering inclusion means planning change’

The creation of a society in which all people can participate fully on an equal basis is a task for the whole of society. It will entail changes in all aspects of everyday life and all societal institutions. A process as complex as this demands a great deal in terms of coordination and monitoring mechanisms. Therefore, within the framework of good governance measures, development cooperation actors too are called on to advise and support partner country efforts to establish mechanisms for the coordination and independent monitoring of implementation of this Convention.

The States Parties ...

• shall designate one or more focal points within government for matters relating to the implementation of the present Convention and shall give due consideration to the establishment or designation of a coordination mechanism within government to facilitate related action in different sectors and at different levels;
• shall establish independent mechanisms to promote, protect and monitor implementation of the present Convention.

Civil society, especially persons with disabilities and their organisations, shall be involved and participate fully in the monitoring process.
Articles 34 – 50

Articles 34 to 50 are not addressed in this publication. They largely cover ...

- the mandatory reporting mechanisms on the implementation of the Convention;
- the role and function of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- cooperation between States Parties and the committee;
- the framework conditions for signing and ratification along with the terms of the Convention.

For the complete text of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities see: