

Persons with Disabilities Stakeholder Group Statement

2021 HLPF Session 1: The SDGs in time of crisis: A sustainable inclusive and resilient recovery from Covid-19 as an opportunity to realize the SDGs

Tuesday, 6 July, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

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I represent Disabled Peoples' International, a member of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities. Thank you to for this excellent discussion. I am a woman with a disability, and have lived through many recoveries from disasters in my home country of Lebanon. I would take these moments to emphasize one crucial component of inclusive and resilient recovery from Covid-19, or any disaster: participation in all phases of recovery.

Throughout the pandemic, persons with disabilities have been discriminated against in accessing health care facilities, denied accessible information to protect themselves and their loved ones, and other preventable barriers to their right to health and to life. Decades of gains in development – and what we thought were gains for our equal human rights – have been wiped out. **What** we choose to do next is just as important as **how** we choose to do it.

For sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery from Covid-19, all governments must include persons with disabilities and their representative organizations at every stage of planning. 182 states are party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and therefore have a legal obligation to ensure our meaningful inclusion and participation in planning. But it also just makes good sense; we know the most about how to make sure programs are accessible and inclusive for a complete recovery that benefits all of society. Thank you for the opportunity to take the floor.