

WUF11 SESSION CONCEPT NOTE

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ROUNDTABLE

Making the New Urban Agenda (NUA) a reality by promoting accessibility to and inclusion of all people with disabilities as a prerequisite for inclusive, sustainable, and equitable urban development

1. List of Partners Contributing to the Session:

- General Assembly of Partners-PCG Persons with Disabilities
- World Blind Union (WBU)
- World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry
- OHANA Indonesia
- Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities
- Kenya Association of Intellectually Handicapped (KAIH).
- Cities 4 All network / Disability-Inclusive & Accessible Urban Development network (DIAUD).
- World Enabled
- United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
- Accessibility Council (Poland)
- Global Disability Innovation Hub
- General Assembly of Partners - PCG Older Persons
- City of Amsterdam
- City of Mersin
- City of Villa Carlos Paz
- City of Turkey
- City of Argentina
- City of Poland
- Gdańsk University of Technology
- Activation Foundation
- Zero Project
- Mastercard/Nike
- World Health Organization
- World Bank

2. Key Words:

Universal design, inclusive design, participation, non-discrimination, accessibility, disability inclusion

3. Objectives of the Session:

- Assess progress and learnings towards making urban areas inclusive of and accessible to all persons with disabilities in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, NUA, SDG11.
- Strengthen the engagement of national, regional, and local governments, authorities, urban practitioners, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, academia, and private sector towards cities for all, including “how to” foster processes and consultative mechanisms that ensures meaningful OPD engagement in urban policy and practice.

- Explore the synergies between, leadership, local governance, meaningful participation, implementation of the NUA, in addressing intersecting forms of discrimination and removal of physical, digital, and social barriers towards cities for all where all can live independently in their communities.
- Explore strategies, tools and actions towards building back better together after crises, ongoing conflicts and emergencies, including through inclusive and accessible urban climate and humanitarian action, Disaster Risk Reduction, COVID-19 recovery and post-conflict reconstruction.

4. Summary:

The WUF11, ‘Transforming our Cities for a Better Urban Future’ presents an opportunity for all stakeholders including persons with disabilities to engage and ensure that their diverse voices and aspirations are heard and their rights and needs are accounted for. The Persons with Disabilities Roundtable is a key meeting point for participants working to build inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements. The Roundtable will serve as a space to discuss and share experiences, strategies, tools and actions for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and urban dimension of the SDGs, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It will gather a wide diversity of stakeholders, including across government levels, urban practitioners, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, institutes, academia, and representatives from the older persons’ constituency.

WHO (2021), estimates that 1 billion people experience disability, corresponding to 15% of the global population with the figure increasing due to population growth and the ageing process¹. Persons with disabilities are disproportionately represented in the poorest quantile of the population and face additional challenges due to discriminatory laws and policies, environmental barriers and lack of support to services that enable the enjoyment of their rights². Emergencies, including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate crisis and ongoing conflicts reminds us that much remains to be done to address discrimination and accessibility barriers which sustain inequalities and exclusion of diverse persons with disabilities.

The NUA shares the vision of cities for all where all persons are able to enjoy equal rights and opportunities and where no one is left behind³. It highlights the critical importance of ensuring meaningful participation of all persons with disabilities in decision-making processes, along with the need for collective capacity building and cooperation between governments, civil society and academia.

5. Guiding Questions for Discussions:

Dialogue 1: Stocktaking – learning from experiences and practices

1. What are examples of progress, learnings, and existing gaps in legislation, application of universal design principles and adoption of international accessibility standards and design guidance?

¹ <https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>

² <https://unhabitat.org/topic/disability>

³ <https://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf>

2. What does an inclusive and equitable city for persons with disabilities look like? Including what measures are necessary to ensure accessibility, capacity building, monitoring, financing and mechanisms for participation and accountability?
3. What practices, tools and frameworks are stakeholders using and what are the potential for replication across contexts?

Dialogue 2: Building Back Better Together – Next steps and actions for a better urban future

4. What are the actions and progressive steps required in developing inclusive and coordinated urban climate actions, humanitarian action and accessible Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), specifically in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crises and ongoing conflicts as the world is seeking to build back better?
5. In what ways is technical expertise and experience of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations mainstreamed in the operationalization of the New Urban Agenda?
6. What is the role of disability disaggregated data and inclusive design in transforming our cities for a better urban future? A better urban future for persons with disabilities?

6. Expected Outcomes and Impact:

The outcome of the Roundtable will be a report, containing a summary of the discussion, key take-aways and recommendations for national and local governments, other stakeholders, and UN-Habitat, and will inform the “Katowice Declared Actions”. The report will be made available on the website of UN-Habitat.

7. Session Format:

This roundtable will be in hybrid format. The Run of Show of this session will include high-level opening remarks, segment on setting the scene of the session, moderated dialogue on stocktaking, lessons learnt and practices (40 min) and a second dialogue (45 min) on building back better together and next steps. It will end with closing remarks, and a call to action on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in building back better after crises, emergencies, and ongoing conflicts.

Between the two dialogue segments there will be a break during which the online participants will be prompted to share reflections, questions and ideas feeding into the second dialogue segment (actions & next steps). The session will be accessible both for in-person and remote participants. It will have captioning, interpretation in International Sign-Language, Polish Sign Language, translation into the six UN languages and Polish.