

# COVID-19, Inequalities and Persons with Disabilities

Murali PADMANABHAN

Disability Inclusion Advisor

International Mayors Forum Preparatory Webinars
29 October 2020







#### Background: I \* B = D

#### Impairment (I)

Limited or total loss of functioning in parts of the body or organs of the body:

- Physical
- Sensorial
- Intellectual
- Mental Conditions

#### Barriers (B)

Aspects that intentionally or unintentionally exclude people with disabilities from full and equal participation in society:

- Physical,
- Legal
- Institutional
- Environmental
- Attitudinal



# **Background: Relevance and Urgency**

- Persons with disabilities = 15% of world population
- More than half of them live in cities and towns that are not accessible to them
- 6.25 billion people predicted to inhabit urban centres by 2050
- → Nearly 1 billion urban dwellers with disabilities by 2050 and sustainability challenge for adequate infrastructure



### The Impact of COVID-19

Exacerbate

Create

Transform



#### Impact: Exacerbate Inequalities

- Access to WASH
- Access to information
- Experience of violence

→ Example: Public health information by local governments inaccessible





# **Impact: Create New Inequalities**



- Restrictions on personal assistance
- Access to health services
- Food security and nutrition

→ <u>Example</u>: Regular rehabilitation appointments cancelled



#### **Impact: Transform Situation**

Education and Work:
Shift to digital, home-based processes

- Create new barriers for some
- Lift existing barriers for others





#### **Leave No One Behind in COVID-19**





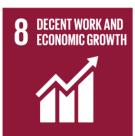


































# A Case-Study from Chennai, India





#### Way Forward: Leave No One Behind



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



#### **Way Forward: Recommendations**

- Ensure accessibility of all local public health updates.
- Ensure continuity of essential health services such as regular rehabilitation and medicine distribution.
- Provide exemptions for people with disabilities such as allowing close contact with personal assistants.
- Collaborate with local OPDs (organisations of people with disabilities) to identify needs, reach audience, etc.



# Way Forward: Further Reading

Some excellent resources on inclusive COVID-19 response:

- Policy Brief by UN Secretary-General: <u>Link to PDF</u>
- UNESCAP Policy Recommendations: <u>Link to PDF</u>
- Guidance Note by WHO: <u>Link to PDF</u>
- Recommendations by IDA: <u>Link to PDF</u>
- UN DESA Webinar: <u>Link to HTML</u>



#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

m.padmanabhan@light-for-the-world.org +91 966 331 2676

