

COVID-19, Inequalities and Persons with Disabilities

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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
- Example: 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: [Link to PDF](#)
- UNESCAP Policy Recommendations: [Link to PDF](#)
- Guidance Note by WHO: [Link to PDF](#)
- Recommendations by IDA: [Link to PDF](#)
- UN DESA Webinar: [Link to HTML](#)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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