

Expert Group Meeting  
HLPF 2016: Shaping the reporting by Major Groups and Other Stakeholders on their  
contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda  
19 April 2016  
Orange Cafe Conference Room  
UNFPA Offices, 605 Third Avenue

Panel discussion on mapping of modalities for MGoS participation in national and  
thematic reviews at the HLPF, in accordance with resolution 67/290

María Verónica Reina, Asociación Azul, Argentina (Persons with disabilities)

Persons with disabilities comprise an estimated 15 per cent of the world's population, or one billion people, of whom 80 per cent live in developing countries and are overrepresented among those living in absolute poverty. We often encounter discrimination and exclusion on a daily basis. This means, in particular, pervasive exclusion from development programs and funds, as well as all areas of economic, political, social, civil and cultural life, including employment, education and healthcare.

We were not referenced in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and as a result were excluded from many important development initiatives and funding streams around the world. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes persons with disabilities and has thus opened doors for their participation and recognition as active contributing members of society: who must not face any discrimination or be left out or behind.

Out of the 169 targets across the 17 Goals, seven targets have an explicit reference to persons with disabilities. Further, all Goals and targets are applicable to persons with disabilities by simple virtue of universality, which applies to all persons, and the overarching principle of “leave no one behind.”

We strongly believe that only by utilizing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as a guiding framework in implementing the SDGs, will it be ensured that exclusion and inequality are not created or perpetuated. This includes institutional, attitudinal, physical and legal barriers, and barriers to information and communication, among other such barriers.

The CRPD was adopted on December 13, 2006. It is the first comprehensive international treaty that specifically protects the human rights of persons with disabilities. The Convention contains 50 articles that address all areas of life – civil, political, social, economic, education and culture. Despite the Convention's comprehensive nature, its process was the quickest negotiation of a Convention in United Nations history, with unprecedented participation of persons with

disabilities. The International Disability Alliance was instrumental in establishing the International Disability Caucus (IDC), the network of global, regional and national organizations of persons with disabilities and allied non-governmental organizations, which was to become a key player in the negotiation of the CRPD. Actually, one of the major aims of the Alliance is to promote the effective and full implementation of the CRPD worldwide. In doing that, for example, IDA monitors each session of the Universal Periodic Review and advocates for the integration of the rights of persons with disabilities into recommendations made to the States under Review. From these experiences and others (such as the Conference of the State Parties to the CRPD), we would like to share some key points:

- Accessibility standards are crucial for any process
- It is important for stakeholders from civil society to receive national reports beforehand to make recommendations based on them
- Member States processes (for instance, national reviews) should be inclusive of civil society (eg. persons with disabilities)
- Side events organized by Member States with the participation of civil society to discuss national implementation could be fruitful
- Also, Side Events organized by Civil Society inviting States to discuss national implementation
- Celebrating Member States with good practices can be very helpful
- Monitoring the participation of civil society, particularly persons with disabilities, is of utmost importance for us. Leave no one behind should be overall principle for each HLPF – with the required allocation of slot of member states to report on implementation particularly for vulnerable groups