



Response by the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities to the Revised Zero Draft of the Political Declaration to be adopted at the HLPF on Sustainable Development, under the Auspices of the General Assembly in September 2023

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities (SGPwD) welcomes the Revised Zero Draft of the Political Declaration and expresses its deepest appreciation to the co-facilitators and member States for the enhanced focus on acknowledging the additional and intersecting barriers faced by persons with disabilities and highlighting the critical need to address them to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) truly do not leave anyone behind.

We particularly commend the draft for:

- The inclusion of disability focus towards removing inequalities, promoting inclusive and just societies through the addition of the following text in **paragraph 12**: *“We commit to ensuring that persons with disabilities actively participate in and equally benefit from sustainable development efforts.”*
- The recognition of the contribution that persons with disabilities can make towards the SDGs through a specific mention in **paragraph 20**: *“We commit to enhancing global, regional, national and local partnerships for sustainable development, engaging all relevant stakeholders, including local and regional governments, parliamentarians, Indigenous Peoples, research institutes, children, civil society, the private sector, academia, women, youth, local communities, persons of African descent, **persons with disabilities** and older persons, recognizing the important contribution they can make to the 2030 Agenda.”*
- Intersectional approach to gender equality through a focus on women and girls with disabilities in **para 37 (a)**: *“We commit to targeted and accelerated action to remove all legal, social, and economic barriers to achieving gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls, **including those with disabilities**, ...”*
- The critical need to address the disability gap in ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all in para 37 (b): *“We will address barriers to girls’ education, gender and **disability gaps** and promote gender equality in and through education and safe, healthy and stimulating learning environments that enable all learners to achieve their full potential...”*
- *The continued focus on disability data disaggregation in **paragraph 37 (p)**.*



We call upon the co-facilitators and all member States to ensure that the focus on intersectionality and inclusion to address the marginalization faced by persons with disabilities is retained between now and September when the Declaration will be adopted. In particular we stress the need to retain the clear and important disability specific sentence in paragraph 12 and urge States to retain it unchanged throughout the negotiations. Building on this, the draft would be considerably enhanced by reference to the meaningful participation of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, and a reference to inclusive funding with dedicated markers for disability inclusion. We also urge the co-facilitators and member States to further consider the following recommendations in order to strengthen the intersectional approach particularly the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

III. [Call to action – turning our world towards 2030]

1. In paragraph 37, we call for the addition of a standalone paragraph on persons with disabilities, reflecting that persons with disabilities are the largest and most marginalized group, disproportionately affected by the interconnected crises that are hindering development efforts. This would build on and provide detail for how to implement the paragraph 12 commitment to *"to ensuring that persons with disabilities actively participate in and equally benefit from sustainable development efforts"*:

Proposed new text to be added as standalone subparagraph:

37 (a) bis We commit to creating a new social contract with persons with disabilities, making all funds and programmes disability-inclusive, providing support services to ensure community inclusion, with the goal of ensuring an accessible and inclusive world for persons with disabilities and fulfilling the rights of all persons with disabilities.

2. In paragraph 37 (c) we call for acknowledging the digital divide for persons with disabilities:

Proposed text:

*We will continue to take action to bridge the digital divides and spread the benefits of digitalization, **recognizing that innovation must be inclusive and accessible, and should not reinforce barriers or create new ones particularly for persons with disabilities.***



*...We will leverage digital technology to expand the foundations on which to strengthen **inclusive** social protection systems.*

3. In paragraph 37 (d), we stress the need to highlight inclusivity and accessibility including for persons with disabilities in the context of ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition:

Proposed text:

*We will accelerate actions to end hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition, including through access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods, the transition to sustainable and resilient agrifood systems, and by promoting safe, healthy and diversified diets and consumption practices **with particular attention to marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities**. We commit to keep trade channels and markets open for the movement of food, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs and outputs.*

4. In paragraph 37(e) we stress the need to highlight accessibility for persons with disabilities in water scarcity:

Proposed text:

*We will address water scarcity and stress and drive transformation from a global water crisis to a world where water is a sustainable resource, ensuring the availability, **accessibility** and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all...*

5. In paragraph 37(h) we call for inclusion and accessibility of approaches to disaster risk reduction:

Proposed text:

*We commit to implementing the calls to action from the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction to promote **an inclusive and accessible** disaster risk-informed approach to sustainable development at the local, national, regional and global levels and to accelerating progress on integrating disaster risk reduction into policies, programmes and investments at all levels, ...*

6. In paragraph 37 (n) we propose the following on assistive technology and AI:

Proposed text:

*We commit to responsibly use science; technology; and innovation, **especially access to affordable and accessible technology**; including space technology and applications, as drivers*



of sustainable development and to build the capacities necessary for sustainable transformations. We will seek to better realize the benefits and address the challenges of artificial intelligence especially those faced by persons with disabilities.

7. In paragraph 37 (o) we propose the following on the science, technology and innovation divide:

Proposed text:

*We commit to bridging the science, technology and innovation divide, including the gender **and disability** divide, and providing financial and technical support and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms to developing countries, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.*

8. In paragraph 37 (p) we propose the following on data:

Proposed text:

*We pledge to take action to strengthen international, national and subnational data systems efforts to collect high quality, timely, relevant, disaggregated and reliable data on SDG progress and to intensify efforts to strengthen data and statistical capacities in developing countries. We will continue to strengthen our efforts to collect, analyse and disseminate relevant and reliable data, disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, for better monitoring and **inclusive** policymaking to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. We commit to increasing the availability of **reliable and comparable** SDG data and closing SDG data gaps at all levels, increasing domestic financing for data and statistics, and embracing new data sources and innovative approaches.*

9. In paragraph 37 (q), we propose the following on meaningful participation of representative organizations:

Proposed text:

*We will continue to integrate the SDGs into our national policy frameworks and develop national plans for transformative and accelerated action. We will make implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the SDGs a central focus in national planning and oversight mechanisms. We will further localize the SDGs and advance integrated planning at local and sub-national levels, **with a focus on meaningful participation of representative***



organizations particularly those from marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities.

10. In paragraph 37 (r) we recommend a standalone reference to inclusive funding with dedicated markers for disability inclusion:

37 (r(ii)) bis

Proposed new text to be added as standalone point:

We commit to further align domestic and resource flows towards SDG implementation and introduce equitable budget processes that support the commitment to leave no one behind and facilitate the active participation of relevant civil society organizations, including Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, in strengthening the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

For more information or to further discuss persons with disabilities in the context of the SDGs development agenda, please contact: Dorodi Sharma dsharma@ida-secretariat.org