



E-mail: congohandicap@gmail.com

DISABILITY INCLUSIVE WATER

Around 15 per cent of the world's population, or about one billion people, live with a disability, making people with disabilities the world's largest minority. People with disabilities face barriers that prevent them from realizing basic human rights such as access to clean and safe drinking water. These barriers and the many rights they interfere with make disability inclusion a human rights issue. People with disabilities face inequity, inaccessibility, discrimination and stigmatisation, all of which limit their participation in education, employment, health care, protection and so forth, contributing to an increased risk of poverty and marginalisation.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 9 on accessibility, states it is the right of people with disabilities to 'participate fully in all aspects of life'. This includes ensuring people with disabilities have equal access to, amongst other things, the physical environment.

In DRC , 13 millions peoples with disabilities , do not have access to water. Disabilities are often seen as shameful, even a punishment from God. These cultural stigmas mean people with disabilities are often 'invisible' in their communities; even their basic human needs are often left unconsidered. The stigma around disability is often compounded by cultural taboos around talking about sanitation and hygiene issues ([ocha](#))

According to HNO/HRP 2021 estimates, of the 15% of the global population of people with disabilities in DRC, 2.9M are in humanitarian need in the DRC and 1.2M are targeted for an inclusive humanitarian response for this year 2022. In order to help the victims of this crisis in the city of Kinshasa, Congo Handicap plans to that people with disabilities can benefit from access to accessible water services (in households, including displaced persons and refugees in the DRC)

Assess and augment current WASH training tools to improve disability inclusion.

After identifying disability inclusive WASH experts within the organization, their knowledge and experiences can be leveraged for staff capacity building. This approach will take advantage of Congo Handicap internal capacity for disability inclusive WASH, fill any knowledge gaps, and help to standardise trainings to improve overall organisational capacity.

Source: [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\) | United Nations Enable](#)

Education



Accessible WASH at school contributes to children with disabilities staying in school. Children with disabilities, girls especially, are often not able to attend school because they do not have access to a toilet, which makes it impossible to make it through a full school day – especially for a girl who is menstruating.

- Accessible WASH at home supports a child’s acceptance in society. When a child is not able to care for his or her hygiene, the child is unlikely to be welcomed by peers or to participate in school. This, in addition to the negative attitude towards persons with disabilities, can be a further marginalization factor for a person with disabilities.
- Access to sanitation has important cultural and social implications for women.

Not having access to safe and adequate WASH facilities usually means women must navigate unsafe terrain, often alone, and usually at night, to find a private place outdoors to take care of their sanitation needs.

If toilets are not accessible, women and girls with disabilities will continue to remain at risk of violence.

- Access to WASH supports opportunities for employment and self-sufficiency for people with disabilities
- Collaborate with DPOs to conduct disability sensitization workshops in program areas.
- Create a round table sub-theme: Inclusive access to water for people with disabilities
- Initiate studies and conversations with experts to discuss how to interpret the rights of persons with disabilities in light of the standards and principles that underpin the CRPD and access to water
- National offices learn whether the government has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty and an instrument imperative to a national government’s commitment to the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. This will require collaboration amongst WASH, disability teams and advocacy teams.
- Disability inclusive WASH is the standard approach across all WASH programmes, regardless of whether a community or household currently has members with disabilities. It does not require demographic justification.
- Persons with disabilities are able to participate fully only when infrastructure, services and systems are accessible and when the community has a welcoming attitude. Furthermore, even if current data shows there are no persons with disabilities, people may be injured or become ill – temporarily or permanently. People age, or babies can be born with disabilities.

Source: [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\) | United Nations Enable](https://blogs.worldbank.org/water/how-can-we-make-water-and-sanitation-more-inclusive-and-accessible)
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