



THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES

Towards Full and Effective Participation
and Gender Equality



This Strategy is designed to guide the work of UN Women in support of Member States, civil society actors including organizations of women and girls with disabilities, and other partners to implement commitments, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, through gender-responsive and disability inclusive initiatives. UN Women will adopt an inclusive and intersectional approach to support intergovernmental, operational and internal processes to advance the rights of women and girls with disabilities in all their diversity across the humanitarian-development continuum. To effectively implement the strategy, UN Women will utilize a multi-pronged approach to invest and engage in three complementary areas: (a) normative frameworks, policies and programmes, (b) strategic partnerships, and (c) inclusive management to enhance accessibility and operational responses. The overarching objective of this strategy is to support UN Women personnel and key stakeholders to facilitate the full inclusion and meaningful participation of women and girls with disabilities. This would be done across all UN Women's priority areas through our intergovernmental processes, coordination, operational responses and management to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls with disabilities.

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STRATEGY

THE EMPOWERMENT OF
WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH
DISABILITIES

Towards Full and Effective
Participation and Gender Equality



UN WOMEN

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
FGE	The Fund for Gender Equality
FPI	Flagship Programme Initiatives
GLAD Network	Global Action on Disability Network
GTTDI	UN Women's Global Task Team on Disability and Inclusion
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	Headquarters
IANGWE	Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IASG-CRPD	Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
IASMN	Inter-Agency Security Management Network
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics
UNCT	United Nations Country Teams
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	The United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	The United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UNPRPD	United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNTF to ERAW	The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
UN WOMEN	The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UN Women's Strategy: The Empowerment of Women and Girls with Disabilities – Towards Full and Effective Participation and Gender Equality was developed to ensure a more systematic approach to strengthen the inclusion of the rights of women and girls with disabilities in UN Women's efforts to achieve gender equality, empowerment of all women and girls, and the realization of their rights.

It is estimated that more than one billion people in the world experience some form of disability. The average prevalence rate in the female population 18 years and older is 19.2 per cent, compared to 12 per cent for males,¹ representing about 1 in 5 women.

Women with disabilities are not a homogenous group. They experience a range and variety of impairments, including physical, psychosocial, intellectual and sensory conditions, that may or may not come with functional limitations. The diversity of women and girls with disabilities also includes those with multiple and intersecting identities, such as being from a particular social class or ethnic, religious and racial background; refugee, migrant, asylum-seeking and internally displaced women; LGBTQI+ persons; women living with and affected by HIV; young and older women; and widowed women, across all contexts.

The systemic marginalization, attitudinal and environmental barriers they face lead to lower economic and social status; increased risk of violence and abuse including sexual violence; discrimination as well as harmful gender-based discriminatory practices; and barriers to access education, health care including sexual and reproductive health, information and services, and justice as well as civic and political participation. This hinders their participation on an equal basis with others.

International and national laws and policies on the rights of persons with disabilities have historically neglected aspects of gender equality. Similarly, laws and policies addressing gender equality have traditionally ignored the rights of women and girls with disabilities. Systemic barriers coupled with the failure to prioritize the collection of data on the situation of women and girls with

disabilities have perpetuated the invisibility and situation of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that excludes them from various aspects of life as well as across the humanitarian-development continuum.

UN Women's Strategy: The Empowerment of Women and Girls with Disabilities – Towards Full and Effective Participation and Gender Equality was developed to ensure a more systematic approach to strengthen the inclusion of the rights of women and girls with disabilities in UN Women's efforts to achieve gender equality, empowerment of all women and girls, and the realization of their rights. The Strategy aligns with UN Women's Strategic Plan 2018–2021 and commitments made in the common chapter to the Strategic Plans of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women, and further builds upon UN Women's work in the area of empowerment of women and girls with disabilities.

To effectively implement this Strategy, UN Women will continue to leverage its triple mandate: its expertise in the area of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, its operational presence and its longstanding relationship with civil society actors. UN Women will carry out its mandate and support Member States and other partners to accelerate progress towards gender equality and the empowerment and full and effective participation of women and girls with disabilities, in line with commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). It will also contribute to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning

of the United Nations Development System, and Decision 2018/20, The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, of the Secretary-General of United Nations.²

The overarching objective is to support the full inclusion and meaningful participation of women and girls with disabilities across all UN Women's priority areas through the implementation of its mandate, as well as through reviewing its accessibility as an organization. To this end, UN Women will invest and engage in three complementary areas: (a) normative frameworks, policies and programmes, (b) strategic partnerships, and (c) inclusive management to enhance accessibility and operational responses.

To ensure that no one is left behind, it is essential that an inclusive and intersectional approach is adopted in line with UN Women's guiding principles. An intersectional approach takes into consideration all conditions that create the substantively distinct life experience of an individual based on factors such as sex, disability, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, health, status, age, and class.³ This will require a paradigm shift, where all women and girls with disabilities, in all their diversity and across their life course are included as equal partners across the humanitarian–development continuum, and their rights and agency are fully realized.

Consistent with the gender mainstreaming approach, UN Women proposes the use of a multi-pronged approach in all areas of its work within UN Women and through our coordination, normative and operational responses, including in collaboration with and support to partners. The approach consists of (a) mainstreaming a gender perspective and the rights of persons with disabilities of all ages, (b) initiatives targeting women and girls with disabilities, and (c) inclusion of women and girls with disabilities.

Leveraging this approach, UN Women will provide normative guidance, integrated policy advice, operational support and technical assistance for programme development and capacity development to contribute to ensuring that all initiatives are gender-responsive and disability-inclusive.

- **UN Women will strengthen normative frameworks, policies and programmes to become gender-responsive and inclusive of women and girls with disabilities.** In this regard, UN Women will contribute to (i) the collection, analysis and dissemination of reliable data and statistics on women and girls with disabilities to inform policies, programmes and other initiatives, (ii) the design and implementation of innovative and accessible solutions and initiatives to address structural barriers, and (iii) addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by women and girls with disabilities, recognizing that the lived realities and experiences of heightened disadvantage of individuals caused by structural barriers.
- **UN Women will also build synergies through collaboration and partnerships, to enhance the capacities, knowledge and networks that each partner brings. The leadership of partners –** including organizations and networks of women and girls with disabilities, their representative organizations, other women's organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities, foundations, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), Member States, the private sector, and research and academic institutions – can strategically contribute to the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities.
- **To more effectively work with and support partners, UN Women will take specific steps to review its approach, services and facilities to become more accessible and inclusive to persons with disabilities, particularly all women and girls with disabilities, and promote inclusive attitudes at the workplace.** This will be done including through promoting reasonable accommodation and universal design in all areas of its work, and through enhancing its internal capacities for inclusion and diversity, and other actions.

UN Women's Global Task Team on Disability and Inclusion (GTTDI)

UN Women's Global Task Team on Disability and Inclusion (GTTDI), with representation by focal points from different business units representing Headquarters (HQ), Regional and Country Offices, will continue to provide guidance, support and consultation on the implementation of the Strategy.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About the Strategy

UN Women's Strategy: The Empowerment of Women and Girls with Disabilities – Towards Full and Effective Participation and Gender Equality aims to strengthen the inclusion of the rights of women and girls with disabilities in UN Women's efforts to achieve gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls, and the realization of their rights in line with its mandate, and international norms and standards, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which resolves to leave no one behind, the Strategy aligns with UN Women's Strategic Plan 2018–2021, and commitments made in the common chapter to the Strategic Plans of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women, and further builds upon UN Women's work in the area of empowerment of women and girls with disabilities. The Strategy will also contribute to the implementation of General Assembly resolution [72/279](#) on the repositioning of the United Nations Development System and of the Secretary-General of United Nations decision 2018/20, The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.⁴

An inclusive approach is essential for the effective implementation of this strategy. This can be done by (a) capitalizing on UN Women's comparative and collaborative advantages, drivers of change, and enablers identified in the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, (b) the full inclusion and meaningful participation of women and girls with disabilities in UN Women's priority areas across its intergovernmental, operational and internal processes, and (c) the formulation, implementation and evaluation of other corporate strategies with an intersectional lens, including the [Strategy for Inclusion and Visibility of Indigenous Women](#), the [Youth and Gender Equality Strategy](#), and [Making Innovation and Technology Work for Women](#).

This will require a paradigm shift, where all women and girls with disabilities, in all their diversity and

across their life course are included and considered equal partners across the humanitarian–development continuum, and their rights and agency are fully realized.

Building on the twin-track approach for gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, and for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities – which consist of targeted interventions and mainstreaming across all sectors – the Strategy proposes a multi-pronged approach across all areas of work. This approach consists of (a) mainstreaming gender, age and disability perspectives, (b) initiatives targeting women and girls with disabilities, and (c) inclusion of women and girls of all ages with disabilities within UN Women and through its coordination, normative and operational responses.

This Strategy has been informed by existing institutional literature and evaluation documents as well as consultations with partners, including women with disabilities and their representative organizations, as well as organizations of persons with disabilities.⁵

1.2 About women and girls with disabilities

It is estimated that more than one billion people in the world experience some form of disability, and that the average prevalence rate in the female population 18 years and older is 19.2 per cent, compared to 12 per cent for males.⁶

Women with disabilities are not a homogenous group. They experience various types of impairments, including physical, psychosocial, intellectual and sensory conditions, that may or may not come with functional limitations.⁷ In addition to this, the diversity of women and girls with disabilities includes those with multiple and intersecting identities, such as being from different ethnic, religious and racial backgrounds; refugee, migrant, asylum-seeking and internally displaced women; LGBTQI+ persons; women living with and affected by HIV⁸; young and older women; and widowed women, across all contexts.

As a consequence of multiple identities, some women and girls with disabilities are pushed to the extreme margins and experience profound discriminations.⁹

Systemic barriers and exclusion lead to lower economic and social status;¹⁰ increased risk of violence and abuse including sexual violence;¹¹ early and forced marriage discrimination as well as harmful gender-based discriminatory practices; and barriers to access education, health care¹² including sexual and reproductive health,¹³ information and services, and justice, as well as civic and political participation.¹⁴ Women and girls who experience intersecting forms of discrimination also experience higher rates of unemployment¹⁵ and encounter other gender-based barriers such as precarious livelihoods, unequal access to and control over assets and resources, child care responsibilities and a lack of access to maternity protection.¹⁶

International and national laws and policies on the rights of persons with disabilities have historically neglected aspects related to gender equality. Similarly, laws and policies addressing gender equality have traditionally ignored the rights of women and girls with disabilities.¹⁷ Systemic barriers coupled with the failure to prioritize the collection of data on the situation of women and girls with disabilities and to disaggregate and report it accordingly continues to perpetuate their invisibility and marginalization.

1.3 Barriers and gaps to the full and effective participation of women and girls with disabilities

Women and girls with disabilities, in all their diversity, encounter challenges to participation that arise from an array of systemic barriers, including of a legal, physical, informational, communicational and attitudinal nature. These barriers include inadequate availability, implementation and resourcing of data and evidence, legislation, policies¹⁸, and governance mechanisms; the lack of design of accessible products, environments and processes; and inadequate access to justice, education,¹⁹ rehabilitation,²⁰ habilitation, and personal and assistive technology services.²¹

Discriminatory attitudes present additional barriers to education, employment,²² and health care,²³ including sexual and reproductive health,²⁴ as well as social, political²⁵ and cultural participation and access to justice. These attitudes can manifest in or be caused by harmful gender-based prejudices, practices and cultural norms – such as ageist attitudes and intimate partner and familial violence.

Gaps that prevent the full and effective participation and leadership of women and girls with disabilities across the humanitarian–development continuum that this Strategy hopes to address include (a) gaps in access to resources and capacity and (b) gaps in alliances.

Box 1. Selected definitions and concepts contained in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- **Discrimination** on the basis of disability is any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation.
- **Disability** is an evolving concept which results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Gaps in access to resources and capacity for women with disabilities and their representative organizations hinder their effective leadership and participation across the humanitarian–development continuum. Organizations of women and girls with disabilities find it difficult to access funding, as their work may not fit within the standard portfolios of women’s rights or disability rights funders²⁶ or funding mechanisms are inflexible and do not accommodate them. Intentional investment, including by human rights and women’s rights donors, in these organizations and networks and their capacities is critical to bridge these gaps to ensure full and effective leadership and participation.

Gaps in alliances among women’s rights organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities, and organizations of women and girls with disabilities often result in the rights of women and girls with disabilities being overlooked during the development and implementation of policies and programmes and intergovernmental processes. It is crucial to support the strengthening of alliances across movements by including women and girls with disabilities.

1.4 Guiding international normative frameworks

Several international, national and regional norms and standards, including human rights treaties and outcomes of various global conferences, directly or implicitly call for the inclusion and empowerment of all women and girls with disabilities across their life course. These include the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#), the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol \(CRPD\)](#), the [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#), the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

While [CEDAW](#) does not explicitly refer to women and girls with disabilities, the General Recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women No. 18 (a) notes that women with disabilities are doubly marginalized and recognizes the scarcity of data,

and (b) calls on States parties to provide this information in their periodic reports and ensure the participation of women and girls with disabilities in all areas of social and cultural life.²⁷

The [CRPD](#) includes equality between men and women as one of its general principles. Article 6 on women and girls with disabilities recognizes the multiple forms of discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities, and calls for the full development, advancement and empowerment of women.²⁸ The [General Comments](#) on the Convention address issues that uniquely or disproportionately affect women and girls with disabilities, including [General Comment No. 3](#) on Article 6: Women with disabilities.

The [CRC](#) recognizes the rights of children with disabilities in Article 23. The Article states that children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support, as well as all the rights in the Convention, so that they can live full and independent lives.²⁹

The [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), identifies specific actions to ensure the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities in various areas, bringing disability inclusion into the general efforts to address the multiple barriers to empowerment and advancement faced by women and girls.

Box 2. Article 6 - Women with disabilities

1. States Parties recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination, and in this regard shall take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by them of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the present Convention.

Source: [Article 6](#), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, [A/RES/61/106, Annex I](#).

The [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#) commits to providing social protection and access to education, employment and technologies for persons with disabilities and encourages States and the business sector to work in partnership with regional and national organizations. The Agenda also recognizes that achieving gender equality, women's empowerment and the realization of women's human rights are essential to achieving inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, and therefore investment in this area needs to be prioritized.

In the context of disaster risk reduction and humanitarian action, the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030](#) emphasizes the importance of disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction. The Framework calls for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of policies, plans and standards on disaster risk reduction, and promotes the leadership of women and youth in the process.

In 2016, commitments made during the **World Humanitarian Summit** included the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and disability inclusion in humanitarian action. [The Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#) endorsed by Member States, UN agencies, including UN Women, and a number of human rights networks and organizations, made specific reference to women and girls with disabilities. The Charter calls for the empowerment and protection of women with disabilities from physical, sexual and other forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and harassment and commits to collecting data on persons with disabilities disaggregated by age and sex.

The [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#) recognizes the vulnerability of various at-risk groups, including women, children and persons with disabilities, and the significant contribution and leadership of women in refugee and migrant communities. The Declaration includes commitments to mainstream gender perspectives, promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and fully respect and protect the human rights of women and girls, taking into consideration the needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of women, girls, boys and men.

The [New Urban Agenda](#) implicitly applies to women and girls with disabilities by recognizing the multiple forms of discrimination faced by women and girls, and persons with disabilities among other populations including children and youth, people living with HIV, older persons, indigenous peoples and local communities, slum and informal-settlement dwellers, homeless people, workers, smallholder farmers and fishers, and refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and migrants, regardless of their migration status.³⁰ The Agenda commits to eliminate discrimination; provide equal access to technology, employment and public services, including transport infrastructure, for persons with disabilities; and ensure their participation in decision-making processes in urban planning.

Several **General Assembly resolutions** in the context of gender and empowerment include references to inclusion of the rights of women and girls with disabilities, and resolutions on the rights of persons with disabilities contain references to the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality.³¹ Most recently, the General Assembly resolution, [A/RES/72/162](#), Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities, focuses on a number of key issues critical to realizing the rights of women and girls with disabilities on the equal basis with others, namely multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination; education and employment; access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health; access to justice and equal recognition before the law; and participation in public and political life.³²

[Security Council Resolution 1325](#) calls for women to participate in peacebuilding, be better protected from human rights violations, and have access to justice and services to eliminate discrimination.³³

Over the past few years, the agreed conclusions adopted by the **Commission on the Status of Women** have called for gender-inclusive and disability-inclusive development³⁴ and the full realization of the rights of women and girls with disabilities³⁵ and have highlighted the importance of disaggregated data and a strong evidence base.³⁶

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

recognizes that systematic mainstreaming of gender-based perspectives is crucial to making progress across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, and calls for the empowerment of persons with disabilities. The 2030 Agenda has a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and includes persons with disabilities in the SDGs related to poverty, hunger education, washing, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), economic growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, climate change, and data, monitoring and accountability.³⁷ The effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda will further contribute to the inclusion and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities.

At the regional level, the European Union adopted the [European Disability Strategy 2010–2020](#), prioritizing eight areas to empower persons with disabilities, including participation and equality. The Asia and Pacific region adopted the [Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real”](#) for persons with disabilities, with 1 of the 10 goals dedicated to ensuring gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Box 3. General comments on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- a. [General Comment No. 1 on Article 12](#): Equal recognition before the law. *11 April 2014*.
- b. [General Comment No. 2 on Article 9](#): Accessibility. *11 April 2014*.
- c. [General Comment No 3 on Article 6](#): Women and girls with disabilities. *26 August 2016*.
- d. [General Comment No 4 on Article 24](#): Right to inclusive education. *26 August 2016*.
- e. [General Comment No 5 on Article 19](#): Living independently and being included in the community. *27 August 2017*.
- f. [General Comment No 6 on Article 5](#): Equality and non-discrimination. *9 March 2018*.
- g. [General Comment No 7 on Article 4.3 and 33.3](#): Participation with persons with disabilities in implementation and monitoring of the Convention. *21 September 2018*.

For more information, including calls for and submissions and easy-to-read versions, see: [Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comments](#).

II. VISION

2.1 Strategic goals and outcomes

The goal of this Strategy is to contribute to UN Women’s efforts of achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls with disabilities and ensure their full and effective participation in all aspects of life on an equal basis with others in the context of development, human rights, and peace and security.

Guided by international norms and standards, a human-rights-based approach, the principles of leaving no one behind and “nothing about us without us”, and in line with its Strategic Plan 2018–2021, UN Women will support the strengthening and implementation of a comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms and standards by contributing to the following four interconnected and interdependent outcomes:

• **Women with disabilities lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems:**

This outcome will contribute to more women with disabilities of all ages fully participating, leading and engaging in political institutions and processes **including women with disabilities to reach decision-making positions**; more national and local plans, strategies, policies and budgets that are **gender-responsive and disability-inclusive**; **more and better quality disaggregated data and statistics to promote and track progress, including for those in vulnerable situations**; and more justice institutions that are **accessible to and deliver for women and girls in all contexts**, including women and girls with disabilities.

• **Women with disabilities have income security, decent work and economic autonomy:**

This outcome will contribute to more policies promoting **decent work and social protection** for women; more women, including women with disabilities, owning, launching and/or managing small, medium and large enterprises **including through ensuring access to digital, financial,**

technical and vocational education and training opportunities, as well as leveraging public and private procurement processes; more rural women, including rural women with disabilities, securing access to, control over and use of productive resources and engaging in sustainable agriculture to increase their income security, work conditions and resilience to climate change.

• **All women and girls with disabilities live a life free from all forms of violence:** This outcome will contribute to more countries and stakeholders being better able to prevent violence against women and girls and deliver quality essential services to victims and survivors with **attention to women and girls at greater risk**, including women and girls with disabilities; and more cities having safe and empowering public spaces for women and girls **that are accessible to all.**

• **Women and girls with disabilities contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience and benefit equally, taking into account their needs, from the prevention of natural disasters and conflict and from humanitarian action:** This outcome will contribute to more women, including women with disabilities, **playing a greater role and being better served** by humanitarian responses and recovery efforts, as well as disaster risk management processes.

To achieve these outcomes, UN Women will continue to play a central role in (a) promoting gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls with disabilities in all aspects of its work, (b) supporting Member States, upon their request, (c) coordinating the United Nations system and (d) mobilizing civil society actors,³⁸ the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, at all levels, in support of gender-responsive and disability-inclusive implementation of programmes, policies and intergovernmental processes.

To this end, UN Women will continue to strengthen its relationship with organizations and networks of women and girls with disabilities; will facilitate relationships between women's organizations and networks; will make considered efforts to connect women with disabilities and their organizations and networks; and will facilitate relationships between organizations and networks of women with disabilities, other women's organizations, and organizations of persons with disabilities, thereby increasing the inclusion and representation of women and girls with disabilities in the women's rights movement.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Annex 1), including its General Principles (Box 2) will guide the implementation of the Strategy.

Box 4. General Principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- (a) Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
- (b) Non-discrimination;
- (c) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- (d) Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- (e) Equality of opportunity;
- (f) Accessibility;
- (g) Equality between men and women;
- (h) Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities

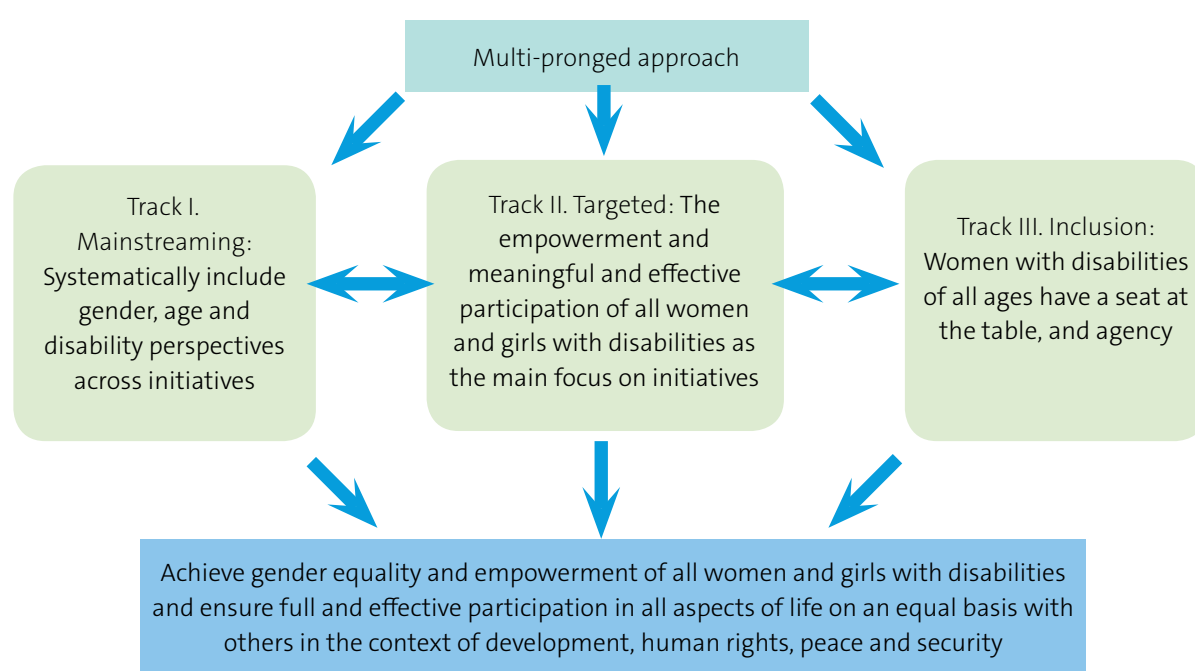
Source: [Article 3](#) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

III. TRANSLATING THE VISION INTO RESULTS: APPROACH AND MENU OF SERVICES

3.1 Multi-pronged approach

Consistent with the gender mainstreaming approach, to achieve the empowerment of all women and girls with disabilities and their full and effective participation, UN Women will use a multi-pronged approach in all areas of its work, including in collaboration with and to support partners. The approach consists of (a) mainstreaming gender, age and disability perspectives, (b) initiatives targeting women and girls with disabilities, and (c) inclusion of women and girls with disabilities within UN Women and through our coordination, normative and operational responses, as illustrated in the figure and table below.

Figure 1. Elements and menu of services of the multi-pronged approach



Box 5. Why a multi-pronged approach?

“Widespread development practice and learning have established that a multiple-track strategy for gender mainstreaming has greater potential for achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment ... This approach consists of combining gender-targeted or focused interventions for specific social groups, organizations and/or processes with gender efforts integrated across the substantive general work of all priority sectors.”

Source: Guidance note – Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programming

Table 1. Elements and menu of services and description of the multi-pronged approach

Approach		Description	Examples of internal initiatives
Mainstreaming	Track I (a) Mainstreaming Disability	Initiatives for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls that systematically mainstream the rights of women and girls with disabilities through their life course in the development and implementation of initiatives.	In Fiji, as part of the Safe Cities Initiative, UN Women supported the local government in the development and design of structural plans for the improvement and/or development of infrastructure and facilities to ensure that these plans guarantee access for people with disabilities, are safe for women and girls including women and girls with disabilities, are environmentally friendly, and address issues such as child care. ³⁹
	Track I (b) Mainstreaming Gender	Initiatives for the inclusion of persons with disabilities that mainstream gender and age perspectives and are fully accessible to women and girls with disabilities.	In Morocco, UN Women supported a baseline gender analysis of the policy on persons with disabilities and the integration of gender in the national policy of protection of the rights of people with disabilities. ⁴⁰
	Track I (c) Mainstreaming Gender and Disability Mainstreaming Gender and Disability	Initiatives that are disability-inclusive and gender-responsive, reflecting the rights and diverse perspectives of women and girls and women and girls with disabilities of all ages.	In the Dominican Republic, Centro de Investigación para la Acción Femenina (CIPAF), a grantee of the Fund for Gender Equality, drafted the first Plan for Equality in the Digital Agenda in the world to be based on a consultation with women, including women with disabilities. Twenty women with different disabilities received specialized training and are now managing a computer centre to train and assist other women in similar situations. ⁴¹
Targeted for and with women and girls with disabilities	Track II (a) Gender equality interventions	Initiatives targeted to increase the empowerment and participation of women and girls with disabilities in interventions relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women.	UN Women's project on Strengthening Networks of Women with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action , ⁴² implemented by the Women's Refugee Commission supported the participation of women with disabilities in national, regional and global processes related to development and humanitarian action. It brought together refugee and internally displaced women with disabilities, organizations of persons with disabilities, women's organizations, and other humanitarian and development actors. ⁴³

Approach		Description	Examples of internal initiatives
Targeted for and with women and girls with disabilities	Track II (b) Disability-inclusive and disability-specific interventions	Initiatives targeted to increase empowerment and participation of women and girls with disabilities in interventions for the inclusion of persons with disabilities.	The Leonard Cheshire Disability Trust of Zimbabwe, a grantee of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, provided accessible legal assistance, counselling and other services to women and girls with disabilities who are victims of gender-based violence. ⁴⁴
	Track II (c) Interventions focusing on areas other than gender equality and disability inclusion	Initiatives to increase empowerment and participation of women and girls with disabilities in interventions focusing on other areas that were not initially intended to be for the empowerment of women and girls, nor gender-responsive or disability-inclusive.	In Senegal, through the Gender Equitable Local Development programme implemented by UN Women, women with disabilities participated in workshops and trainings on Senegal's landmark social orientation law, adopted in 2010, and on addressing the unique and specific needs of women with disabilities in menstrual hygiene management. ⁴⁵
Inclusive	Track III Inclusion of women and girls with disabilities	Women with disabilities have a seat at the table, and agency in initiatives and interventions.	In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with the support of UN Women, the Development Tools for Engendering Local Participatory Mechanisms integrated the principle of leaving no one behind through the Gender Responsive Budgeting Project. Women, especially those most marginalized, including women with disabilities, were provided a space to voice their concerns and influence policymaking and budgeting processes. ⁴⁶

3.2 Leveraging UN Women's comparative and collaborative advantages

UN Women will leverage its triple mandate of normative support, UN coordination and operational activities to contribute to the empowerment and inclusion of women and girls with disabilities. It will also do this through three comparative and collaborative advantages: expertise in gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, its operational presence, and its partnerships. UN Women will focus on providing six types of support to Member States and partners: normative support, UN coordination for gender equality and women's empowerment, integrated policy advice, capacity development, advocacy and social mobilization, and technical assistance.

3.2.1 Triple mandate

UN Women will leverage its triple mandate described above in support of commitments for gender equality and women's empowerment. It will support the strengthening of global norms and standards in relation to women and girls with disabilities. Upon request by Member States, UN Women will translate global norms and standards into legislation, policies and development plans at the regional, national and local levels as part of its operational activities⁴⁷ to contribute to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including women and girls with disabilities. UN Women will also promote more effective coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming across the UN system in relation to women and girls with disabilities. This can be done, for example, through the commitments made by funds and programmes on the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the common chapter. Finally, UN Women will seek to include and empower women and girls with disabilities through its operational activities, as previously described in relation to the other two mandates.

3.2.2 Expertise in gender equality and empowerment of women

UN Women will leverage its comparative and collaborative advantages in the interests of women and girls with disabilities. It will also leverage its pool of expertise in gender equality and women's

empowerment⁴⁸ in gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and programme implementation to provide support to partners and stakeholders to incorporate gender perspectives in disability-related initiatives and to ensure that gender equality interventions are inclusive of persons with disabilities, including women and girls with disabilities across their life course.

UN Women will also leverage this expertise to provide specific technical and sectoral support through partnerships with other UN entities on mainstreaming gender-responsive and disability-inclusive approaches in programming across different thematic areas including education, health, livelihoods and social protection.

3.2.3 Operational presence

UN Women's growing presence across regions and strong relationship with civil society actors will be leveraged to contribute to strategic initiatives to achieve results for sustainable change for women and girls with disabilities.

3.2.4 Partnerships

UN Women will leverage its longstanding relationships with women's organizations and civil society actors, and continue to strengthen its partnerships with women and girls with disabilities, and their representative organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities to enhance participation and strengthen capacities and contributions in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities.

UN Women will strengthen its partnerships with research and academic institutions, foundations and private entities, as well as with networks of women and girls with disabilities and their representative organizations to leverage their knowledge and resources in support of this Strategy.

UN Women will continue to work with UN agencies to achieve greater normative, operational and institutional unity and coherence on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities,⁴⁹ actively engage in inter-agency and multi-stakeholder mechanisms and processes, including the [Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality \(IANWGE\)](#), the [Inter-Agency Support Group on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(IASG\)](#), the [United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UNPRPD\)](#), the [Global Action on Disability \(GLAD\) Network](#), the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#), and the [Inter-Agency Security Management Network](#), as well as other processes related to development, human rights, peace and security, and humanitarian action, to further the goals of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, including women and girls with disabilities.

3.3 Means of implementation and strategic areas of investment and engagement

Through this Strategy, **UN Women will carry out its mandate and support States and other partners to accelerate progress** towards gender equality and the empowerment and full and effective participation of women and girls with disabilities, including within the framework of UN Women's Flagship Programme Initiatives (FPIs), grant-making mechanisms, and support to United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs).

The **Flagship Programme Initiatives (FPIs) and thematic global initiatives** can be leveraged to mainstream disability, age and gender perspectives to achieve transformative results for and with women and girls with disabilities. FPIs and thematic global initiatives act as vehicles to coalesce partners around common goals in line with UN Women's collaborative advantages, and serve as modalities for joint programming and implementation.

Grant-making mechanisms, including [UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality on Women's Political and Economic Empowerment](#), the [United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women administered by UN Women](#), and the [Global Acceleration Instrument](#) to support local responses to peace, security and humanitarian issues will continue to directly support the capacity and work

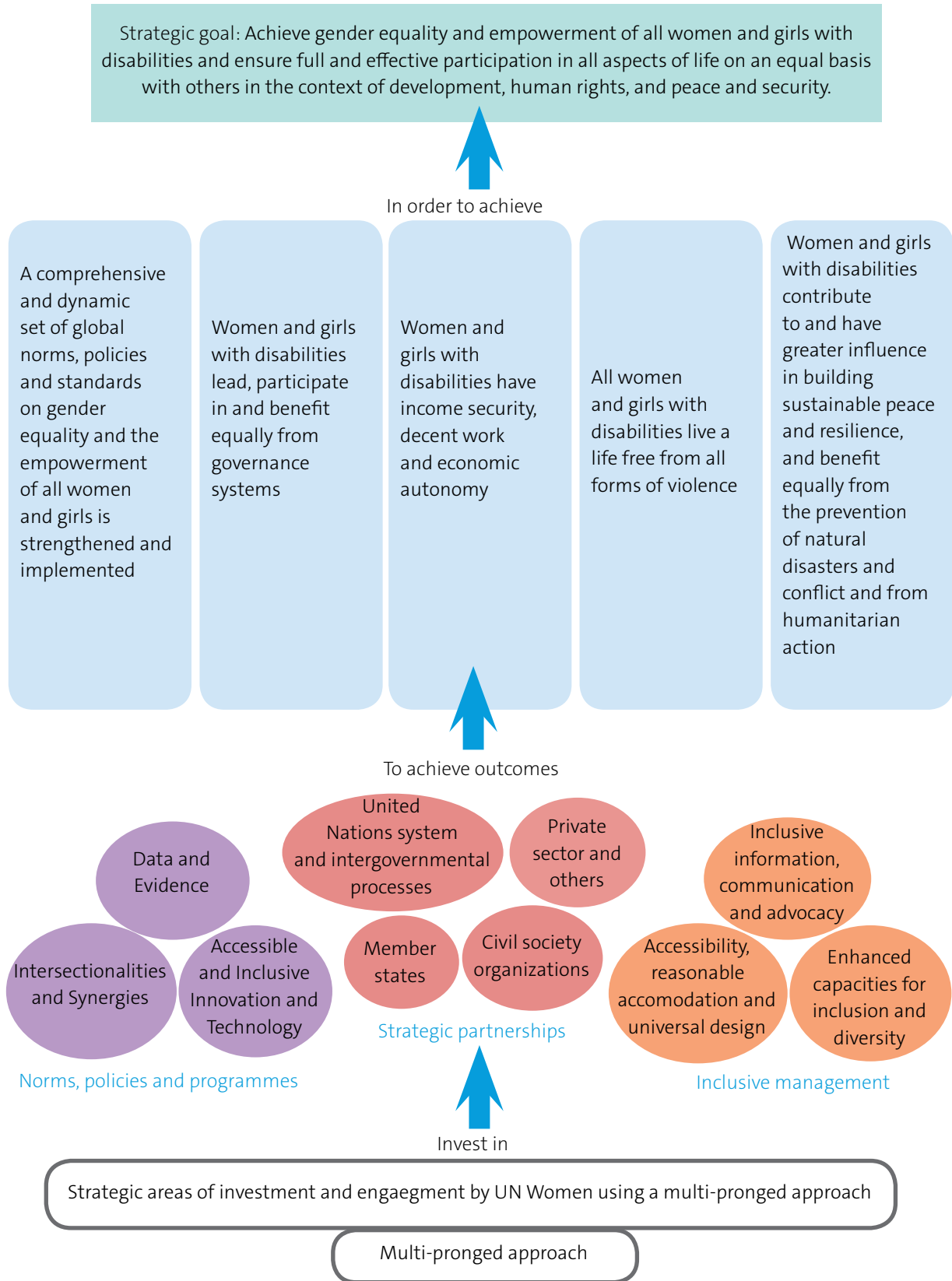
of organizations of and for women and girls with disabilities and foster innovation.

Within its coordination mandate, UN Women will work with partners to contribute to mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities along with gender perspectives, in the development of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) and other exercises, such as humanitarian assessments and response plans.

To effectively implement the Strategy, UN Women will invest and engage in three complementary areas: (a) normative frameworks, policies and programmes, (b) strategic partnerships, and (c) inclusive management to enhance accessibility and operational responses. An action plan will be developed to implement this Strategy in support of the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018–21.

Figure 2. Graphical representation

Means of implementation strategic areas of investment and engagement



3.3.1 Normative framework, policies and programmes

Utilizing the multi-pronged approach described above, UN Women will provide normative guidance, integrated policy advice, operational support and technical assistance for programme and capacity development to help ensure that initiatives are gender-responsive and inclusive of the rights of persons with disabilities. To this end, UN Women will engage women and girl with disabilities at all levels, including to:

- Collect, analyse, disseminate and use reliable data and statistics on women and girls with disabilities to inform policies, programmes and other initiatives.
- Support innovative and accessible initiatives and solutions to address structural barriers.
- Support initiatives addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by women and girls with disabilities.

3.3.1.1 Data and evidence on women and girls with disabilities

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires robust knowledge, as well as disaggregated data, to identify solutions that most benefit women and girls. In order to fulfil the commitment to leave no one behind, it is essential that data are disaggregated by disability status, age, geographic location and sex, among other variables.

Many countries collect data on persons with disabilities in their census and surveys;⁵⁰ however, rarely are the data processed and disseminated with simultaneous disaggregation by sex, age and disability. Lack of statistics in this area is due to failure to prioritize its collection as well as lack of resources. Scarcity of reliable and comparable national, regional and global statistics, data and information on the situation of persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities, is an obstacle to achieving development planning and implementation that is inclusive of women and girls with disabilities.⁵¹ Therefore, there is a need to strengthen data collection and capacity to support evidence-based policies and programmes inclusive of all women and girls with disabilities.⁵²

Disaggregated data provide strong evidence to inform policies and programmes that effectively address barriers for women and girls with disabilities across the humanitarian–development continuum. It is, therefore, essential to expand efforts across census and survey data collection to collect, analyse and disseminate statistics disaggregated by sex, age and disability, among other variables, through the use of existing tools including the [Washington Group on Disability Statistics’](#) questionnaire. This could yield significant improvements in data availability on women and girls with disabilities.

UN Women is committed to promoting the production of disability data and statistics and when available use it in its work on gender statistics, including in the context of SDG 5, on gender equality and empowerment all women and girls. To improve data collection and the capacity to support evidence-based policies and programmes inclusive of women and girls with disabilities, including the Flagship Programme Making Every Women and Girl Count (MEWGC), UN Women intends to:

- Promote disaggregation of data by sex, age and disability with existing tools, including with partners and other stakeholders, and when possible make it a requirement, for example, through supporting the implementation and proper utilization of the [short questionnaire](#) developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics to identify persons with disabilities, as well as the [Child Functioning Module](#), developed by the Washington Group and UNICEF, to identify children with disabilities.
- Support the collection and use of gender, age and disability statistics, and the generation of knowledge and evaluations on the situation of women and girls with disabilities, including with organizations of women and girls with disabilities, multilateral and bilateral partners, leading research institutions, national statistical offices, Member States and other stakeholders.
- Use and support the production of data and evidence that engages women and girls with disabilities directly to ensure that their perspectives are reflected and used to complement other data sets.

- Support information exchange platforms, including user–producer dialogues on disability statistics by sex, in close consultation with women with disabilities.
- Strengthen the capacities of organizations of women and girls with disabilities, their representative organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities and women’s organizations to collect data on women and girls with disabilities in all their diversity.
- In line with the principle of leaving no one behind, prioritize the most vulnerable through UN Women’s programming and reporting with data disaggregated by disability, income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, geographic location, sexual orientation, gender identity and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, whenever possible and relevant, including the nine development results indicators it intends to disaggregate by disability status across thematic areas.⁵³
- Strengthen knowledge management practices and develop partnerships to better collect and share evidence and data with both internal and external stakeholders, to improve policy and programmes.⁵⁴

3.3.1.2 Accessible technology and innovative approaches in programmes

Achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment demands transformative shifts and innovative solutions to remove structural barriers. Innovation and technology provide unprecedented opportunities in this regard, particularly for women and girls with disabilities, rural women, older women and other women experiencing marginalization.⁵⁵ The growing field of innovation and technology have led to the emergence of social innovations and innovative products that are transforming assistive devices and services offered to women and girls with disabilities.

UN Women’s Innovations Strategy, [“Making Innovation and Technology Work for Women”](#), focuses on developing the market for innovations that advance gender equality and women’s empowerment; promoting innovations created by women, for women; and de-risking high impact innovations that benefit marginalized women. Several entry points can be identified between this

strategy and the Innovations Strategy to ensure that innovative solutions are accessible for women and girls with disabilities and that they can play an active role in shaping them to their needs. To increase the development of innovative solutions for gender-responsive and disability-inclusive initiatives, UN Women will:

- Focus on the need for direct investments in a limited number of high-impact and accessible innovations that meet the needs of most marginalized women and girls, throughout the life course; and encourage, promote and support scaling up innovative and accessible project designs that have potentially high impact on women and girls with disabilities.
- Encourage and promote inclusive design of innovation with the active participation of women and girls with disabilities as innovators and entrepreneurs, including by prioritizing the education of girls with disabilities and promoting girls in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics), and women with disabilities of all ages in innovation incubators to enable them to become innovators and entrepreneurs.
- Prioritize initiatives that promote partnerships with UN agencies, social enterprises and civil society actors developing products and services in consultation with women and girls with disabilities to ensure their rights and perspectives are reflected.

3.3.1.3 Intersectionality and synergies

The concept of intersectional discrimination recognizes that individuals do not experience discrimination as members of a homogenous group but, rather, individuals with multidimensional layers of identities, statuses and life circumstances. The idea of intersectionality seeks to capture both the structural and dynamic consequences of interaction between two or more forms of discrimination or systems of subordination.⁵⁶ It acknowledges the lived realities and experiences of heightened disadvantage of individuals caused by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, which requires targeted measures to be taken with respect to disaggregated data collection, consultation, policymaking, the enforcement of non-discrimination policies and the provision of effective remedies.⁵⁷

When gender and disability intersect, women and girls with disabilities experience exclusion and marginalization, and this may be further exacerbated by other forms of discrimination, including those based on age, race, ethnicity, refugee status, sexual orientation and gender expression and identity, and geographic location, as well as type and severity of impairment.

UN Women will adopt an intersectional approach, which recognizes that combining identities does not additively increase one's burden, it instead produces substantively distinct life experiences.⁵⁸ It will address concerns of women, recognizing that a one-size-fits-all programmatic approach is inadequate for recognizing the intra-gender differences among women.⁵⁹

This requires recognizing women and girls with disabilities as actors and agents in developing strategies and solutions around their own realities and that of their wider communities, moving away from conceptual, policy and programming approaches which relate to marginalized women and girls primarily as beneficiaries, to one which engages all women and girls disabilities as rights holders.

UN Women will take steps to:

- Strengthen synergies across thematic focus areas, initiatives and social movements to effectively address the multiple and intersecting identities of women and girls with disabilities.
- Promote a rights-based approach as the core of all initiatives to effectively address intersecting identities.
- Mainstream an intersectional analysis and support the design and implementation of policies and initiatives that do not adversely impact women and girls with disabilities,⁶⁰ including through conducting needs and risk assessments.
- Develop reporting and evaluation tools that capture the effects of multiple forms of discrimination.⁶¹
- Promote an intersectional analysis in the work of other functional commissions, especially during the implementation process of other UN conferences.⁶²

- Direct a percentage of grants towards organizations of women and girls with disabilities, explicitly mention inclusion of rights of women and girls with disabilities in calls for proposals and request the inclusion of indicators that are inclusive of multiple and intersecting identities. Additionally, innovative funding strategies to effectively reach diverse and representative grass-roots organizations should be considered.

3.3.2 Strategic partnerships and collaboration

UN Women will build synergies in a coordinated and collaborative manner, to enhance the capacities, knowledge and networks that each partner brings, to work more effectively work towards gender equality and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities. The leadership of partners – including civil society actors, in particular women and girls with disabilities and their representative organizations, foundations, Member States, the private sector, and research and academic institutions – can strategically contribute to the full and effective participation and leadership of women and girls with disabilities.

UN Women will promote and support **international cooperation and assistance and enhance partnerships and coordination**, including through South–South and triangular cooperation and the active participation of women and girls with disabilities and their representative organizations in the implementation of the Strategy.

UN Women's **engagement and participation in existing United Nations and multi-stakeholder processes and mechanisms**, using the multi-pronged approach, provides unique opportunities to advance the rights and perspectives of women and girls with disabilities. UN Women's engagement and participation with these mechanisms and processes will add value to the existing knowledge and capacity base and will continue to grow.

3.3.2.1 Civil society actors

Civil society is one of UN Women's most important constituencies. Engagement with civil society actors, including women and girls with disabilities, their representative organizations and networks, organizations of persons with disabilities and mainstream women's organizations, provides a dynamic source of ideas and policy perspectives. It is essential that women and girls with disabilities are actively engaged in advancing the goals of this Strategy. UN Women will incrementally take action to:

- Promote diverse representation and participation of organizations and networks of women and girls with disabilities, women's organizations, and organizations of persons with disabilities, and promote collaboration among them.
 - Partner with organizations and networks of women and girls with disabilities, including those who may be experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination or exclusion due to, for example, the type (e.g. intellectual or psychosocial) or severity of impairment, HIV status, refugee status, age, race or ethnicity.
- Support organizations, in particular networks of women and girls with disabilities, through the dissemination of knowledge and information in forms that are accessible, and through convening meetings and providing networking opportunities, knowledge and information exchange, and funding, including to meet each other, including through UN Women's grant-making mechanisms.
 - Strengthen the capacities of women with disabilities and their representative organizations to enhance their participation and contribution to influence decisions, including those taken within the UN System.
 - Conduct consultations and focus group discussions with organizations and networks of women and girls with disabilities, their representative organizations, and other relevant stakeholders during the design, implementation and evaluation of initiatives.

- Invite women and girls with disabilities representing various types of impairments and backgrounds, including young, older, indigenous and refugee women with disabilities, as speakers and participants to meaningfully participate in national, regional, and international consultations, meetings, panels and activities, including observance of international days, expert meetings and the Commission on the Status of Women.

- Promote accessible spaces and forums to strengthen collaboration between and within civil society organizations and networks working towards the inclusion of persons with disabilities and those working towards gender equality and empowerment of all women, and the full and effective realization of their rights.

- Leverage the knowledge and expertise of organizations and networks of persons with disabilities and of women and girls with disabilities, on the inclusion of persons with disabilities to strengthen disability-inclusive responses.⁶³

3.3.2.3 The United Nations System and multi-stakeholder partnerships

UN Women will incrementally take action to:

- Promote integration and coordination of gender equality and women's empowerment alongside the rights of persons with disabilities through coordination mechanisms including, for example, gender teams, disability inclusion task forces, and disability and gender focal points.

- Leverage inter-agency coordination mechanisms at the global, regional and national level to ensure effective inclusion of gender equality and the rights of persons with disabilities.

- Increase cooperation, partnerships and synergies among United Nations entities and organizations of women and girls with disabilities, and their representative organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities, women's rights organizations, and INGOs working on issues related to women and girls with disabilities.

- Leverage the respective collaborative advantages and mandates of UN entities, such as in the areas of sexual and reproductive health; water, sanitation and hygiene; education; and climate change.

- Collaborate with the resident coordinator system and UN Country Team counterparts to help ensure that all United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) specify outcomes for targeted and mainstreamed programming for persons with disabilities across the life course, including women and girls with disabilities.⁶⁵

3.3.2.4 Private sector and others

UN Women will incrementally take action to:

- Increase engagement with the private sector to leverage their resources and knowledge, including in the field of innovation and technology, and promote coordination with other UN entities to transform business practices to support gender equality and women’s empowerment, inclusive of the rights of women and girls with disabilities and not discriminating on the basis of other grounds such as age.

- Seek innovative sources of financing and resources, including with the private and philanthropic sectors.

- Promote gender-responsive and disability-inclusive perspectives and policy changes within partnerships, in consultation with women and girls with disabilities.

3.3.3 Inclusive management

UN Women will take steps to review its approach, services, communications and facilities to become more accessible and inclusive and promote positive attitudes at the workplace, including by strengthening its internal capacity and working effectively with and in support of partners.

3.3.3.1 Accessibility, reasonable accommodation and universal design

UN Women is committed to eliminating barriers by integrating accessibility, including through reasonable accommodation and universal design, in all areas of its work, including human resources guidelines, UN Women premises and programme infrastructure within its operational presence.

Box 6. Selected definitions and concepts contained in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- **Accessibility** to social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education and to information and communication is important to enable persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Accessibility is one of the eight General Principles and is the focus of [Article 9](#) of the Convention, and [General Comment No.2](#) of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- **Universal design** is the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.
- **Reasonable accommodation** is the necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments, not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in particular cases, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- **Communication** includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print and accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology.

To this end, UN Women will take specific actions to incrementally:

- Include accessibility specifications while procuring and tendering, including software, business cards and support services.
- Rent offices spaces that are accessible.
- Promote selection and recruitment processes that are accessible to candidates with disabilities.
- Hold consultations, training sessions and other meetings in accessible venues, and based on assessment with participants as required.
- Monitor accessible physical spaces and communications at UN Women offices and joint premises including through accessibility audits.
- Make websites, information and publications – internal and external – accessible and on request available in accessible formats.
 - Develop UN Women security procedures and processes – including access and emergency response measures – that recognize and respond to the needs of persons with disabilities within its security mainstreaming process.
- Provide reasonable accommodation to personnel with disabilities including through flexible working, travel arrangements, access to UN Women premises, appropriate work equipment, and personal assistance when required, including through establishing a reasonable accommodation fund.
- Consider aspects of accessibility in programme and operational budgets, as budgeting for inclusion is more cost-effective than retro-fitting.
- Promote universal design as the basis of all initiatives, including through capacity development of personnel at all levels.

3.3.3.2 Inclusive and accessible information, communication, awareness raising and advocacy

UN Women will contribute to achieving gender equality and combating stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, including those based on sex, age,⁶⁶ race, ethnicity, gender expression, class, and type of impairment, in all areas of life.

UN Women will incrementally take actions to:

- Promote positive and fair messages about women and girls with disabilities of all ages to transform negative stereotypes and misconceptions.
- Disseminate communication material across multiple platforms in accessible formats, including to raise awareness on and advocate for the rights of women and girls with disabilities.
- Leverage UN Women’s social media presence as well as celebrity and influencer engagement to directly reach audiences with positive portrayals of women and girls with disabilities across the life course, and advocate for the rights of all women and girls with disabilities to a large and diverse audience.
- Increase visibility of women and girls with disabilities through advocacy campaigns and partnerships – including HeForShe and its IMPACT 10x10x10 initiative, the Global Innovation Coalition for Change, the UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, the Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality campaign, and the Unstereotype Alliance – to raise general awareness about the situation of women and girls with disabilities, their rights and contribution.
- Increase visibility of UN Women’s role and work⁶⁷ with and for the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities to inform the wider public, and strengthen collaboration and partnerships in this area.

3.3.3.3 Enhancing capacities for inclusion and diversity

UN Women will take steps to review and strengthen its internal capacity to work effectively with and in support of partners to contribute to the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities.

UN Women will incrementally take action to:

- Make UN Women a more inclusive organization including through the assessment of human resource guidelines and promote a work culture where personnel can work irrespective of their age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability.⁶⁸
- Collect information regarding personnel with disabilities and/or personnel with dependents with disabilities in surveys.
- Strengthen capacities of personnel through awareness raising, information sharing, sensitization workshops and trainings, including those conducted by women with disabilities, on the rights, competencies and contributions of persons with disabilities, with a focus on the rights of women and girls with disabilities in all their diversity.
- Strengthen internal capacities to ensure that all aspects and stages of design, implementation and monitoring of initiatives are disability-inclusive and accessible for women with disabilities.⁶⁹
- Strengthen internal monitoring and reporting capacities to capture results with data disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.⁷⁰
- Provide technical support and guidance to UN Women offices on mainstreaming gender perspectives and disability inclusion, in particular those offices reporting against the development results indicators that require disaggregation by sex and disability status.

- Document lessons learned, and innovative and best practices and promote the exchange of experiences in the framework of all programmes and projects on the rights of persons with disabilities. Promote to and share these experiences, practices and learning with multiple stakeholders.

- Involve women with disabilities and their representative organizations in monitoring and review of the Strategy, drawing on their experience and expertise to provide guidance. This provides a mechanism for strengthening accountability and promotes and enacts the principle of “nothing about us without us”.

IV. REVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP

UN Women's Global Task Team on Disability and Inclusion (GTTDI), with representation and focal points from different business units representing HQ, Regional and Country Offices, will continue to provide guidance, support and consultation on the implementation of the Strategy.

Based on the Menu of Services as explained in Section 3, a Follow-up Action Plan with specific annual targets and indicators will be developed. A baseline will be developed based on information reported in UN Women's online results management system for 2014 to 2017. Progress on implementation will be reported in the context of the mid-term review of UN Women's Strategic Plan. At the end of the period 2018–2021, the current strategy will be reviewed based on progress made and challenges and gaps addressed. In the process, UN Women will continue to collaborate with organizations of women with disabilities as well as their representative organizations and those working with them.

ANNEXES

Annex I Theory of Change

UN Women's Goal: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, including women's full enjoyment of their human rights.

Goal of the Strategy: Achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls with disabilities and ensure their full and effective participation in all aspects of life on an equal basis with others in the context of development, human rights, and peace and security.

Guided by international norms and standards, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and human rights treaties including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Goal (Theory of Change): If (1) more international and national norms and standards, policies and programmes are gender-responsive and inclusive of the rights of persons with disabilities, (2) partnerships and collaboration for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities are strengthened and (3) internal management capacities and processes are improved to mainstream the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities, then women and girls with disabilities will (1) lead and participate in decision-making at all levels, (2) be economically empowered and benefit from development, (3) live a life free of violence, (4) shape peace, security and humanitarian action through their leadership and participation because (1) the rights of women and girls with disabilities across the humanitarian–development continuum will be enjoyed, achieved and attained, (2) more women and girls with disabilities will fully and effectively participate as equal partners across the humanitarian–development continuum and (3) UN Women will become an accessible and inclusive organization to all persons with disabilities.

Outcome 1: More international and national norms and standards, policies and programmes are gender-responsive and inclusive of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Outcome 2: Partnerships and collaboration for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities is strengthened.

Outcome 3: Improved inclusive and accessible internal management capacities and processes.

<p>Outputs</p> <p>1.1 Increased production and use of data and evidence on women and girls with disabilities, gender statistics, and analysis, for evidence-based actions.</p> <p>1.2 More operational responses are inclusive and accessible, leveraging innovation and technology.</p> <p>1.3 Increased ability to address intersecting identities of all women and girls with disabilities including through strengthening synergies.</p>	<p>Outputs</p> <p>2.1 Increased engagement and support to women and girls with disabilities, their representative organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities with considered attention to diversity.</p> <p>2.2 Enhanced coordination, coherence and partnership among the UN system and multi-stakeholder partnerships including with civil society organizations and the private sector.</p> <p>2.3 Leverage the resources, capacity and knowledge of stakeholders.</p>	<p>Outputs</p> <p>3.1 Increased accessibility in all aspects of UN Women’s work.</p> <p>3.2 Improved capacities and awareness to achieve inclusive and accessible information, communication and advocacy.</p> <p>3.3 Enhanced capacities for inclusion and diversity in operational and programmatic responses.</p>
<p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and strengthen capacities of UN Women personnel and partners to recognize and address the intersections of gender and disability among other intersecting identities and collect data on the situation of women and girls with disabilities. • Support and promote the participation of women and girls with disabilities, their representative organizations and networks, and ensure diverse representation through the design and implementation of programmes and policies, as well as the use of data and evidence collected in consultation with women and girls with disabilities, committing to the principles of “nothing about us without us”. • Collaborate with relevant stakeholders across thematic focus areas and social movements to ensure that perspectives are reflected in policies, programmes, data and evidence. 	<p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen cooperation, partnership and synergies among UN entities and leverage respective collaborative advantages and mandates, including through joint programmes. • Actively collaborate and partner with organizations and networks of women and girls with disabilities, other women’s and girls’ organizations, and organizations of persons with disabilities in all their diversity at all levels. • Seek innovative sources of financing and resources, including with the private and philanthropic sector. 	<p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively achieve accessibility in all aspects of UN Women’s work through internal policies and procedures. • Promote dissemination of information and communication through accessible formats and platforms. • Strengthen internal capacities to address accessibility. • Promote universal design as the basis of all initiatives, investing in internal monitoring and reporting capacities, and establishing a reasonable accommodation fund.
<p>Assumptions: (a) Commitment and capacity to collaboratively address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, (b) Adequate capacity, including resources and knowledge, (c) Change in attitudes and beliefs resulting in changes in behaviour, (d) Institutional commitment, (e) Ability to leverage partnerships towards strategy achievement, and (f) Political will.</p>		
<p>Risks and Barriers: (a) Stigma and discrimination, (b) Siloed approaches and ineffective and inefficient responses (c) Competing interests within the organization, (d) Lack of interest and collaborative will, (e) Lack of capacity, resources and knowledge and institutional commitment, (f) Environmental, communication and information barriers, (g) Resistance to furthering the agenda, and (h) Lack of political will and institutional structures.</p>		

Annex II Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - Articles

[Preamble](#)

[Article 1 – Purpose](#)

[Article 2 – Definitions](#)

[Article 3 – General principles](#)

[Article 4 – General obligations](#)

[Article 5 – Equality and non-discrimination](#)

[Article 6 – Women with disabilities](#)

[Article 7 – Children with disabilities](#)

[Article 8 – Awareness-raising](#)

[Article 9 – Accessibility](#)

[Article 10 – Right to life](#)

[Article 11 – Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies](#)

[Article 12 – Equal recognition before the law](#)

[Article 13 – Access to justice](#)

[Article 14 – Liberty and security of person](#)

[Article 15 – Freedom of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment](#)

[Article 16 – Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse](#)

[Article 17 – Protecting the integrity of the person](#)

[Article 18 – Liberty of movement and nationality](#)

[Article 19 – Living independently and being included in the community](#)

[Article 20 – Personal mobility](#)

[Article 21 – Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information](#)

[Article 22 – Respect for privacy](#)

[Article 23 – Respect for home and the family](#)

[Article 24 – Education](#)

[Article 25 – Health](#)

[Article 26 – Habilitation and rehabilitation](#)

[Article 27 – Work and employment](#)

[Article 28 – Adequate standard of living and social protection](#)

[Article 29 – Participation in political and public life](#)

[Article 30 – Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport](#)

[Article 31 – Statistics and data collection](#)

[Article 32 – International cooperation](#)

[Article 33 – National implementation and monitoring](#)

[Article 34 – Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

[Article 35 – Reports by States Parties](#)

[Article 36 – Consideration of reports](#)

[Article 37 – Cooperation between States Parties and the Committee](#)

[Article 38 – Relationship of the Committee with other bodies](#)

[Article 39 – Report of the Committee](#)

[Article 40 – Conference of States Parties](#)

[Article 41 – Depositary](#)

[Article 42 – Signature](#)

[Article 43 – Consent to be bound](#)

[Article 44 – Regional integration organizations](#)

[Article 45 – Entry into force](#)

[Article 46 – Reservations](#)

[Article 47 – Amendments](#)

[Article 48 – Denunciation](#)

[Article 49 – Accessible format](#)

[Article 50 – Authentic texts](#)

Source: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-2.html>. For more information, including the text of the Convention in other languages, see: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>.

Annex III. Selected definitions and concepts contained in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Selected definitions contained in the Convention

Discrimination on the basis of disability is any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation.⁷¹

Disability is an evolving concept which results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.⁷²

Universal design is the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.⁷³

Reasonable accommodation is necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments, not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.⁷⁴

Communication includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia, as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology.⁷⁵

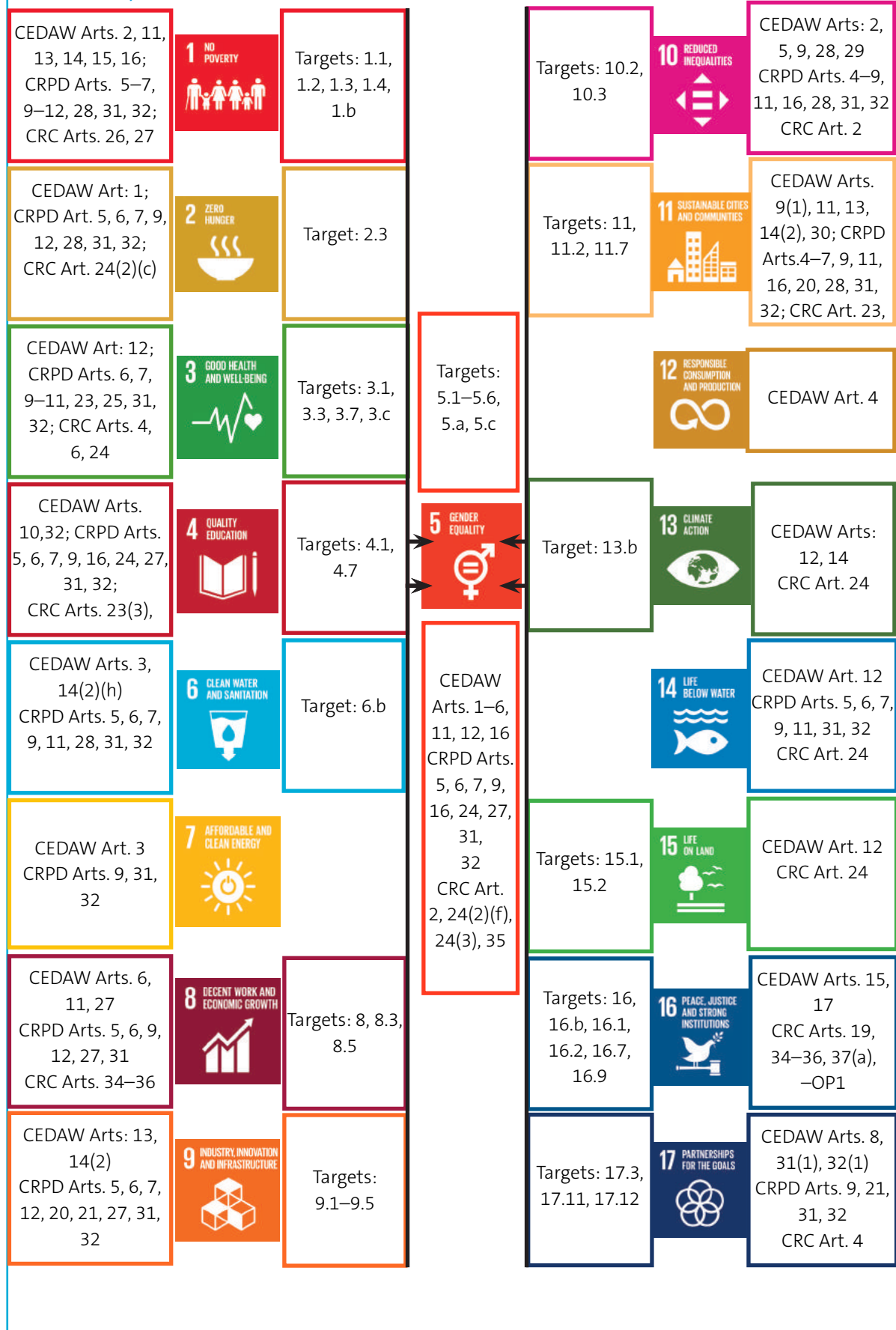
Selected concepts contained in the Convention

Accessibility to a social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education, and to information and communication is important to enable persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.⁷⁶ Accessibility is one of the eight General Principles of the Convention, and is the focus of [Article 9](#) of the Convention, and [General Comment No. 2](#) of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Legal capacity and equal recognition before the law: Legal capacity is indispensable for the exercise of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The denial of legal capacity to persons with disabilities has, in many cases, led to their being deprived of many fundamental rights.⁷⁷ Equal recognition before the law is the focus of [Article 12](#) of the Convention, and [General Comment No. 1](#) of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Living independently and being included in the community: All persons with disabilities have the right to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and the right to full inclusion and participation in the community. Living independently and being included in the community is the focus of [Article 19](#) of the Convention, and [General Comment No. 5](#) of the Committee in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Annex IV. Indicative graphic representation of the relationship of SDG 5, other SDGs and CEDAW, CRPD and CRC*



Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Targets under SDG 5

- 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection
- 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership
- 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights
- 5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources
- 5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, information and communications technology
- 5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation

Source: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-5-gender-equality>

The Beijing Platform for Action: Critical areas of concern

- [Women and the environment](#)
- [Women in power and decision-making](#)
- [The girl child](#)
- [Women and the economy](#)
- [Women and poverty](#)
- [Violence against women](#)
- [Human rights of women](#)
- [Education and training of women](#)
- [Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women](#)
- [Women and health](#)
- [Women and the media](#)
- [Women and armed conflict](#)

Source: <http://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/about>

Endnotes

- 1 World Health Organization (WHO). 2011. World Report on Disability. Available at: http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/
- 2 Following the Executive Committee meeting held on 20 April 2018, the Secretary-General made Decision 2018/20, an internal decision, on the inclusion of persons with disabilities, calling for a review of the UN system's current approach to both accessibility and to mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities; a policy, action plan and accountability framework to strengthen systemwide accessibility and mainstreaming of the rights of persons with disabilities across the Organization's operations; issue guidance to the UN system on issues relating to accessibility and employment of persons with disabilities; and strengthening the communication and coordination capacities of the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention.
- 3 Human rights council, Report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, A/HRC/38/43, para 23. Available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/132/12/pdf/G1813212.pdf?OpenElement>
- 4 General Assembly resolution 71/256, The New Urban Agenda, A/RES/71/256*, para 20. Available at: <http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf>
- 5 Following the Executive Committee meeting held on 20 April 2018, the Secretary-General made Decision 2018/20, an internal decision, on the inclusion of persons with disabilities, calling for a review of the UN system's current approach to both accessibility and to mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities; a policy, action plan and accountability framework to strengthen systemwide accessibility and mainstreaming of the rights of persons with disabilities across the Organization's operations; issue guidance to the UN system on issues relating to accessibility and employment of persons with disabilities; and strengthening the communication and coordination capacities of the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention.
- 6 In December 2017, the draft strategy was shared with over 300 individuals and organizations. Comments and feedback were received from over 45 individuals and organizations including: Australia; Finland; Germany; the United Kingdom; the Disability Rights Fund (DRF); Humanity & Inclusion (HI, formerly known as Handicap International); the International Disability Alliance (IDA); Sight Savers; Women Enabled International (WEI); Women With Disabilities Australia; (WWDA); the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC); OHCHR; SCRDP/DESA; UN Habitat; UNICEF; UNPRPD's Technical Secretariat; UNRWA; UN Women Headquarters and field offices; Ana Pelaez Narvaez, at the time a member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and elected in 2018 as a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; Kerry Gibson, President, UN Women Planet 5050 Champion; Maria Soledad Cisternas Reyes, Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility; Nick Corby, Equal International; Nidhi Goyal, Member of UN Women's Global Civil Society Advisory Group; Sylvia Beales, HelpAge International.
- 7 World Health Organization (WHO). 2011. World Report on Disability.
- 8 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). 2016. General comment No. 3, Article 6: Women and girls with disabilities. CRPD/C/GC/3. Available at: https://tbineternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD/C/GC/3&Lang=en
- 9 In discussing the intersection of HIV and disability, UNAIDS reported data from sub-Saharan Africa suggesting an increased risk of HIV infection of 1.48 times in men with disabilities and 2.21 times in women with disabilities compared with men without disabilities. De Beaudrap, P, Pasquier, E, Tchoumkeu, A, Touko, A, Essomba, F, Brus, A, du Loù, AD, Aderemi, TJ, Hanass-Hancock, J, Eide, AH and Mont, D, 2016; and De Beaudrap, P, Mac-Seing, M and Pasquier, E, 2014, cited in UNAIDS. 2017. Disability and HIV. The same report cites UNICEF. 2012 and Nixon SA, Cameron C, Hanass-Hancock J, Simwaba P, Solomon PE, Bond VA, Menon, A, Richardson, E, Stevens, M and Zack, E. 2014 when talking about stigma and discrimination to say that people with disabilities, in particular women and girls, may be turned away from sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV services.
- 10 Association for Women's Rights in Development, "Intersectionality: A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice", Women's Rights and Economic Change, No. 9 August 2004, p. 2.
- 11 The intersection of poverty, gender and disability is shown in several studies. Regional data show that "there are more poor women with disabilities than poor men with disabilities" and that this trend is also reflected in the overall population. UNESCAP. 2018. Building Disability-Inclusive Societies in Asia and the Pacific: Assessing Progress of the Incheon Strategy. p. 15. Available at: <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/SDD%20BDIS%20report%20A4%20v14-5-E.pdf>); a similar conclusion was found by Groce et al.: "Women with disabilities are more likely to be affected by poverty than men with disabilities." The study states that seven out of nine studies researched provided evidence that women with disabilities were more likely to be poor than men with disabilities highlighting the connection between women with disabilities and poverty (Groce NE, Kumbhavi G, Wirz S, Lang R, Trani JF, Kett M. 2011. Poverty and Disability: A critical review of the literature in low and middle-income countries); in addition, it was reported that "Disabled women are more likely to experience poor social and economic outcomes across their life course" in CEDAW/C/NZL/8; Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention – Eighth periodic report of States parties due in 2016 – New Zealand. State Party's Report. 15 July 2016, para 15.
- 12 It was reported that women with disabilities are twice as likely to suffer physical violence as adults (between 58 per cent and 75 per cent) than the average female population (35 per cent), and that those women surveyed suffered sexual violence around two to three times more frequently than the average female population (21 to 44 percent compared to 13 percent). CEDAW/C/DEU/7-8; Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of States parties due in 2014. State Party's Report. 21 October 2015, paras 140–141.
- 13 In relation to sexual and reproductive health, it was reported that "Women with disabilities are not only less likely to receive general information on sexual and reproductive health and are less likely to have access to family planning services, but should they become pregnant, they are also less likely than their non-disabled peers to have access to prenatal, labour and delivery and postnatal services." (Groce, N, Izutsu, T, Reier, S, Rinehart, W, Temple, B. 2009. Promoting sexual and reproductive health for persons with disabilities: WHO/UNFPA guidance note. Geneva: WHO, p. 10); it was reported that "Women with intellectual disability (ID) have similar rates of breast cancer as the general public, but higher breast cancer mortality and lower rates of regular screening mammography." (Dreyfus, D, Wilkinson, J. 2014. More Than Just a Mammogram: Breast Cancer Screening Perspectives of Relatives of Women with Intellectual Disability. Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Nov 2014, Vol. 52(6), pp. 444–55); in addition, while little research exists, pregnant women with disabilities have expressed perceived doubts on their abilities to be decision-makers or responsible and "proper" mothers. (Blackford, KA, Richardson, H, Grieve, S. 2000. Prenatal education for mothers with disabilities. Journal of Advanced Nursing 200, Oct; 32(4), pp. 898–904).
- 14 WHO reports that "Attitudinal, physical and system level barriers to accessing care are significantly different for women and men with disabilities face than for those without disabilities." (p. 62) and that women with disabilities generally have more difficulties in accessing necessary health-related rehabilitation services, including assistive technology, as compared to men with disabilities (pp. 102–103). World Health Organization (WHO). 2011. World Report on Disability.
- 15 There is no global database on persons with disability in positions of political leadership, disaggregated by sex. Across 17 countries and areas considered in the Asia-Pacific region, of a total of 4,960 national parliamentarians, 20 per cent are women. Of the 18 parliamentarians (or equivalent) with disabilities across the region, only 5 of them are women with disabilities, representing 0.1 per cent of parliamentarians (p. ii, v). "[T]his means that there is a parliamentarian with disability for every 250 parliamentarians and a woman parliamentarian with disability for every 1,000 parliamentarians." p. 40. UNESCAP. 2018. Building Disability-Inclusive Societies in Asia and the Pacific: Assessing Progress of the Incheon Strategy.
- 16 "As disability and gender are both associated with disadvantage, the disadvantages faced by women with disabilities are compounded. Additional factors such as age and race/ethnicity may put certain subgroups of women and girls with disabilities further at risk. This compounded disadvantage is illustrated by the Not in Education or Employment (NEET) rates for female youth, where women with disabilities tend to have the highest rates of being excluded." UN Women. 2018. Turning promises into action: Gender Equality and the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development, p. 179. For more references, see Figure 4.29. Available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/2/gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018>.

- 16 See the Joint Statement Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Supporting The Full And Effective Participation Of Persons With Disabilities. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---nylo/documents/genericdocument/wcms_617780.pdf
- 17 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), General comment No. 3, Article 6: Women and girls with disabilities, CRPD/C/GC/3, para 3. Available at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD/C/GC/3&Lang=en.
- 18 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), General comment No. 3, Article 6: Women and girls with disabilities, CRPD/C/GC/3, para 3. Available at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD/C/GC/3&Lang=en.
- 19 81.8 per cent of women with disabilities have no educational attainment. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). 2017. Strengthening Social Protections for Persons with Disabilities in Arab Countries (E/ESCWA/SDD/2017/2), p. 12. Available at https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/strengthening-social-protection-persons-with-disabilities-advance-copy-en.pdf
- 20 May-Teerink reports “Findings suggest that gender-related issues may limit access to rehabilitative equipment, due to limited financial resources of women living in the developing world.” May-Teerink T. 1999. A survey of rehabilitative services and people coping with physical disabilities in Uganda, East Africa. *Int J Rehabil Res* 22(4), pp. 311–316.
- 21 Borg and Östergren report that “Apart from women, also children have been found to be less likely to access assistive technologies.” Borg, Johan and Östergren, Per-Olof. 2015. Users’ Perspectives on the Provision of Assistive Technologies in Bangladesh: Awareness, Providers, Costs and Barriers. *Disabil Rehabil Assist Technol* 10(4), p. 302.
- 22 It is reported that “women with disabilities may be only half as likely to find a job, compared with men with disabilities.” (UNESCAP. 2018. Building Disability-Inclusive Societies in Asia and the Pacific: Assessing Progress of the Incheon Strategy, p. 42); it was also reported that “The unemployment rate for disabled women is 10 per cent. This is higher than that of disabled men (8 per cent) and non-disabled women (6 per cent)” (CEDAW/C/NZL/8, Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention – Eighth periodic report of States parties due in 2016 – New Zealand. State Party’s Report. 15 July 2016, para 13). Elsewhere, it is stated, “For women, barriers to employment may well be primarily gender related” (Mizunoya, S. and Mitra, S., 2013. Is there a disability gap in employment rates in developing countries? *World Development*, 42, p. 38). ESCWA states that “women with disabilities are on average considerably less likely than persons without disabilities to work. This alone suggests that their social insurance coverage is low, since such coverage is coupled to employment status.” (ESCWA. 2017. Strengthening Social Protections for Persons with Disabilities in Arab Countries, p. 25). Global data show that employment rates for women with disabilities are about ten percentage points lower than for women without disabilities (19.6 per cent compared to 29.9 per cent), and about twenty percentage points lower for men with disabilities (52.8 per cent) (WHO. 2011. *World Disability Report*. p. 237).
- 23 UN Women. 2017. Making the SDGs Count for Women and Girls with Disabilities. Available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/making-sdgs-count-for-women-with-disabilities.pdf?la=en&vs=2823>
- 24 Kira Lee et al. found that “...a range of factors undermine provision of high quality sexual and reproductive health services to women with disability. Service providers often have limited awareness of the sexual and reproductive health needs of women with disability and inadequate understanding of their rights. Service providers have had very little training in relation to disability, and limited access to the resources that would enable them to provide a disability inclusive service. Some service providers hold prejudiced attitudes towards women with disability seeking sexual and reproductive health services, resulting in disability-based discrimination. Service providers are also often unaware of specific factors undermining the health of women with disability, such as violence and abuse.” (Lee, K, Devine, A, Marco, MJ, Zayas, J, Gill-Atkinson, L and Vaughan, C. 2015. Sexual and reproductive health services for women with disability: a qualitative study with service providers in the Philippines. *BMC women’s health*, 15(1), p. 87.
- 25 Barriers to the political participation and leadership of women with disabilities include discriminatory practices in political institutions and local authorities, limited knowledge among duty bearers on their needs and rights, stereotypical perceptions of their capacities, inaccessible processes and facilities, lack of assistance services, devices and facilitating measures, lack of encouragement by family and community and above all limited access to civic information. UNDP Cambodia. 2010. Political Participation of Women with Disabilities in Cambodia, Research Report 2010. Available at: [http://www.sithi.org/admin/upload/media/\[2011-02-03\]Political/2011_01_24_COMFREL_Study_report_Political_participation_of_women_with_disabilities_in_CambodiaENG.pdf](http://www.sithi.org/admin/upload/media/[2011-02-03]Political/2011_01_24_COMFREL_Study_report_Political_participation_of_women_with_disabilities_in_CambodiaENG.pdf)
- 26 Disability Rights Fund. n.d. Supporting Inclusive Movements: Funding the Rights of Women with Disabilities. Available at: http://disabilityrightsfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Supporting_inclusive_movements_web.pdf
- 27 UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), CEDAW General Recommendation No. 18: Disabled Women, Adopted at the tenth session, 1991. Available at: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT/CEDAW/GEC/4729&Lang=en
- 28 UN General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the General Assembly, 13 December 2006. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/ConventionRightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx#3>
- 29 UNICEF. n.d. Fact Sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf
- 30 General Assembly resolution 71/256, The New Urban Agenda, A/RES/71/256*, para 20. Available at: <http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf>
- 31 Including, more recently, General Assembly resolution 70/219, Women in development, A/RES/70/219 (22 December 2015), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/219>; General Assembly resolution 71/167, Trafficking in women and girls, A/RES/71/167 (19 December 2016), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/167>; General Assembly resolution 70/130, Violence against women migrant workers, A/RES/70/130 (17 December 2015), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/130>; General Assembly resolution 71/170, Intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls: domestic violence A/RES/71/170 (19 December 2016), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/170>; General Assembly resolution 70/132, Improvement of the situation of women and girls in rural areas, A/RES/70/132 (17 December 2015), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/132>; General Assembly resolution 66/130, Women and political participation, A/RES/66/130 (19 December 2011), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/66/130>; General Assembly resolution 71/165, Inclusive development for persons with disabilities, A/RES/71/165 (19 December 2016), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/165>; General Assembly resolution 70/138, The girl child, A/RES/70/138 (17 December 2015), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/138>; General Assembly resolution 70/137, Rights of the child, A/RES/70/137 (17 December 2015), available at: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/137>.
- 32 UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) – Disability. 2017. “New GA Resolution on Situation of Women and Girls with Disabilities and the Implementation of CRPD”, 24 November 2017, available at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/news/news/unga72-adopted-a-new-resolution-on-the-implementation-of-crpd.html>
- 33 UN Women. Peace and security, available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security>
- 34 “(h) Take all appropriate measures to adopt and implement disability-inclusive national development strategies and legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect and promote the rights of women and girls with disabilities, as persons with disabilities are more vulnerable to discrimination and violence and are still largely invisible in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals”; UN Women. 2014. Challenges and Achievements in the Implementation of the MDGs for Women and

Girls – 2014 Commission on the Status of Women – Agreed Conclusions, p. 10, available at: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/58/csw58_agreed_conclusions.pdf?la=en&vs=1525

35 “(dd) Promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls with disabilities and the full realization of their human rights and their inclusion in society, and take measures to ensure that women with disabilities have access to decent work on an equal basis with others in the public and private sectors, that labour markets and work environments are open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities, and take positive measures to increase employment of women with disabilities and eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including recruitment, retention and promotion, and the provision of safe, secure and healthy working conditions, in consultation with relevant national mechanisms and organizations of persons with disabilities”; UN Women. 2017. Women’s Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work – 2017 Commission on the Status of Women – Agreed Conclusions, p. 12, available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/61/csw-conclusions-61-web.pdf?la=en&vs=5452>; “ccc. Promote and protect the rights of women and girls with disabilities in rural areas, who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including by ensuring access on an equal basis with others, to economic and financial resources and disability-inclusive and accessible social infrastructure, transportation, justice mechanisms and services, in particular in relation to health and education and productive employment and decent work for women with disabilities, as well as by ensuring that the priorities and rights of women and girls with disabilities are fully incorporated into policies and programmes, and that they are closely consulted and actively involved in decision-making processes;”; ECOSOC, Commission on the Status of Women. 2018. Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. Agreed conclusions, available at <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/62/csw-conclusions-62-en.pdf?la=en&vs=4713>

36 “(eee) Improve systematic and coordinated collection, analysis, dissemination and use of gender statistics and data disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other relevant variables at the national level, through appropriate financial and technical support and capacity-building, while recognizing the need for international cooperation in this regard”; UN Women. 2014. Challenges and Achievements in the Implementation of the MDGs for Women and Girls – 2014 Commission on the Status of Women – Agreed Conclusions, p. 16, available at: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/58/csw58_agreed_conclusions.pdf?la=en&vs=1525; “eee. Strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices and other relevant government institutions to collect, analyse and disseminate data, disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, and gender statistics, to support policies and actions to improve the situation of rural women and girls, and to monitor and track the implementation of such policies and actions, and enhance partnerships and the mobilization, from all sources, of financial and technical assistance to enable developing countries to systematically design, collect and ensure access to high quality, reliable and timely disaggregated data and gender statistics;” ECOSOC, Commission on the Status of Women. 2018. Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. Agreed conclusions.

37 United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the Secretary General on the Situation of women and girls with disabilities and the Status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto, A/72/227, available at: <http://undocs.org/A/72/227>

38 “Civil Society Actors include human rights defenders, human rights organizations (NGOs, associations, victim-support groups), coalitions and networks (on e.g. women’s rights, children’s rights, or environmental issues, land rights, LGBTI, etc.), persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, community based groups (indigenous peoples, minorities, rural communities), faith-based groups, unions (trade unions as well as professional associations such as journalists associations, judges’ and lawyers’ and bar associations, magistrates’ associations, student unions), social movements (peace movements, student movements, pro-democracy movements), professionals contributing directly to the enjoyment of human rights (humanitarian workers, lawyers, doctors, and medical workers), relatives and associations of victims of human rights violations, public institutions that carry out activities aimed at promoting human rights (schools, universities, research bodies)”; OHCHR. 2008. Working with the United Nations Human Rights Programme, A Handbook for Civil Society, p. vii. Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/en/AboutUs/CivilSociety/Documents/Handbook_en.pdf

39 UN Women. 2016. Fiji, Monitoring data, Results Management System.

40 UN Women. 2016. Morocco, Monitoring data, Results Management System.

41 UN Women Fund for Gender Equality. n.d. ‘Leaving no one behind’ in action. FGE Thematic Factsheet. Available at: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/trust%20funds/fundgenderequality/fge_2017_leaving%20no%20one%20behind%20in%20action.pdf?la=en&vs=3111

42 More information is available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/2/strengthening-the-capacity-of-networks-of-women-with-disabilities-on-humanitarian-action>. Also see: “Working to improve our own future”: Strengthening Networks of Women with Disabilities at <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/disabilities/resources/1342-networks-women-disabilities>.

43 Also see: “Bridging the Gap Between Development and Humanitarian Action: The Role of Local Women’s Organizations” Case Study, available at: <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/disabilities/resources/document/download/1402>.

44 UN Women. 2016. Zimbabwe, Monitoring data, Results Management System

45 For more information, see: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/8/in-the-words-of-ndeye-daro-niang>

46 UN Women. 2016. Monitoring data, UN Women’s Online Results Management System

47 UN Women. 2017. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan 2018–2021. UNW/2017/6/Rev.1. para 25. Available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/2017/second%20regular%20session%202017/unw-2017-6-strategic%20plan-en-rev%2001.pdf?la=en&vs=2744>

48 Ibid.

49 For more information, see: UN System Coordination at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination>

50 At least 120 out of 214 countries or areas that conducted a census during the 2010 round included a set of questions on disability, a significant increase from the approximately 19 countries or areas that had included such questions during the 1970 census round. Moreover, there has been a clear trend in using internationally recommended methodologies in data collection. Of the 120 countries that asked a question on disability in their censuses, 55 used questions similar to those developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics. United Nations, General Assembly, United Nations 2018 flagship report on disability and development: realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with persons with disabilities, A/73/220, available at: <http://undocs.org/A/73/220>

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UN WOMEN'S WORK WITH WOMEN
WITH DISABILITIES ILLUSTRATES
HOW THEY ARE ABLE TO SUPPORT
THEMSELVES, TO REMAIN SAFE, TO
RAISE HEALTHY FAMILIES, AND TO
CONTRIBUTE TO STRONGER, MORE
PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES.

- Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Executive Director, UN Women

UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A
GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED
TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON
MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



**Planet 5 -
It Up for Gender Equality**

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