



Advancing the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities worldwide

FACT SHEET: ADVOCACY

Overview: The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The CRPD marked a “paradigm shift” in attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are no longer treated or viewed as objects of charity in need of social protection. The CRPD determined persons of disabilities as subjects with rights and the capability of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent, as well as being active members of society.

According to the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention “is intended as a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced.”

In an address given by RI Secretary-General Venus Ilagan at RI’s National Conference on implementation of the CRPD in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Secretary General stated the following with regard to the CRPD:

“The CRPD has put disability rights on the radar of the UN, and has created awareness among States that they need to address the issues facing persons with disabilities. With this Convention, State officials are realizing that a large portion of their constituents have not been considered in State programming, and that the CPRD marks a new era of human rights.”

The guiding principles of the rights based approach of the CRPD:

1. Linkage: creating a clear link from disability rights to human rights; talking about disability in the accepted language of human rights.
2. Accountability: of both right holders and those who are responsible for ensuring these rights (States).
3. Empowerment: persons with disabilities are not passive recipients of charity but can claim and enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with others.
4. Participation: requires the participation of PWD in all decision making that effects their rights.
5. Non-discrimination: calls upon States to put in safeguards against discrimination of PWD.

RI Advocacy Recommendations on the CRPD



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Individuals can promote the signature, ratification and implementation of the Convention by:

- Writing letters, arranging meetings and contacting government officials, parliamentarians and other policy-makers at the local and national levels to encourage the government to sign, ratify and implement the Convention and Optional Protocol as soon as possible.
- Organizing press conferences or other media activities with local organizations to spread awareness and promote implementation of the Convention.
- Coordinating or participating in campaigns, such as a disability rights awareness day or a letter-writing campaign or petition
- Ensuring that workplaces are accessible to persons with all types of disabilities.
- Making a contribution to or volunteering with disability organizations

Organizations can promote the Convention by:

- *Assessing the situation:* Analyze the current situation facing people with disabilities – legislation, institutions, policies and practices – and consider what issues are priorities for the disability community.
- *Developing media campaign(s):* Increase awareness of the Convention among partners in the disability community as well as other NGOs, (including mainstream human rights organizations), government officials, policy-makers, legal professionals, and the public through the media.
- *Organizing public events:* Raise public awareness of the Convention and the rights of persons with disabilities through meetings, concerts, rallies and other events. Invite well-known and respected individuals to these events to encourage attendance and media attention.
- *Strengthening the dialogue with policy-makers:* Identify the key policy-makers who can affect the decision-making process and promote prompt ratification and implementation of the Convention, while ensuring that disabled peoples' organizations (DPOs) are consulted throughout this process.
- *Building capacity:* Provide support and technical assistance to persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, particularly in developing countries, to engage in self-advocacy.
- *Expanding partnerships in civil society:* Explore ways to collaborate with organizations in different movements, such as women's rights organizations or mainstream human rights organizations, with the aim of greater collaboration and inclusion and mainstreaming of disability rights.
- *Monitoring implementation:* Once the Convention takes effect, participate in the preparation of country reports. Conduct research, independent from governments, on the progress in implementing the Convention. Submit your findings as "shadow reports" to the international monitoring body of the Convention (the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).