
COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York

On the occasion of the 58th session of the Commission for Social Development

Discussion Forum:

**Affordable housing and social protection systems for all persons with disabilities to
address homelessness**

Findings from the Disability and Development Report 2018 and from experts

Wednesday 12 February 2020, 1:15-2:30pm

UN Headquarters, New York, Conference Room 8

organized by the Programme on Disability of the Division for Inclusive Social Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UN Habitat, New York City Department of Social Services and the World Blind Union



Concept note

As the United Nations celebrates its 75th anniversary, this discussion forum aims at commemorating the 25th anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development and contributing to the theme of the 58th session of the Commission for Social Development from a disability perspective.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to adequate housing and their right to social protection (article 28). The Convention has been adopted in 2006 and ratified by 180 countries, which has triggered actions at the national level to protect these rights

and promote adequate housing and social protection for persons with disabilities. In 2015, the UN Member States adopted the Sustainable Development Goals which call for access for all to affordable housing and implementation of appropriate social protections systems for all, including persons with disabilities (Goals 11 and 1).

But persons with disabilities remain largely invisible in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these commitments. Lack of reliable and timely data, evidence and research on persons with disabilities continue to pose challenges to the inclusion of persons with disabilities and the full implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, including Goals 1 and 11.

Recognizing this gap, the UN General Assembly requested a flagship report reflecting on progress towards persons with disabilities vis-à-vis the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and internationally agreed development goals.¹ This report, the ‘Disability and Development | 2018 - Realizing the SDGs by, for and with persons with disabilities’, was released in December 2018 and it is the first report on disability inclusion in the context of the SDGs, including SDGs 1 and 11.

The report shows that despite the progress made in recent years, persons with disabilities continue to face numerous barriers to access affordable and adequate housing and a disproportionate number of persons with disabilities are homeless. They face many barriers that prevent them from enjoying their right to adequate housing, including higher levels poverty, lack of access to employment, discrimination and lack of support for independent living.

Objective of the side event

The forum will debate the situation of persons with disabilities vis-à-vis SDG 1 and 11, as well as article 28 of the CRPD and showcase good practices to be taken for the achievement of affordable and adequate housing and social protection systems for all persons with disabilities to address homelessness. This Forum will include presentations by UN agencies, national and local governments and civil society, followed by an interactive discussion.

The discussions at this Forum will draw on the findings of the UN Disability and Development Report 2018 and other relevant work of the UN system, government and civil society. The focus will be on exploring the next steps to address the current challenges and build on opportunities for the UN and other stakeholders. This event will also discuss next steps for building better evidence to inform policy making.

The discussion may include the following:

- What are the major obstacles faced by UN Member States in responding to the demands arising from the implementation of affordable housing and social protection systems targeting and inclusive of persons with disabilities? In which areas should capacity building efforts focus on?

¹ General Assembly resolution 69/142, *Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond*, A/RES/69/142 (18 December 2014), available from <https://undocs.org/A/RES/69/142>.

- What good practices can be scaled up to provide affordable housing and social protection systems for and inclusive of all persons with disabilities to address homelessness?
- How to build on the synergies among the initiatives at the local, national, regional and international levels to build a coordinated approach and better deliver on the commitments of the CRPD and the 2030 Agenda on affordable housing and access to social protection for persons with disabilities?
- What next steps should be taken by key stakeholders (UN agencies, International Financial Institutions, Member States, civil society, the private sector) to build better evidence to inform and monitor the outcomes of housing policies targeting and inclusive of persons with disabilities?
- How can inclusion and accessibility aspects be addressed in mainstream programs on housing and social protection?

Opening remarks:

Ms. Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations (video message)

Facilitator:

Ms. Akiko Ito, Chief, Program on Disability, Division for Inclusive Social Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations

Speakers:

Ms. Maria Martinho, Social affairs Officer, Program on Disability, Division for Inclusive Social Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations

Ms. Francesca De Ferrari, Programme Management Officer, UN Habitat

Representative from Senegal

Ms. Martha Calhoun, General Counsel and Chief Legal Affairs Officer, New York City Department of Social Services

Mr. Jose Viera, CEO, World Blind Union, and Permanent Representative Stakeholder of Group of Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Mohammed Loufty, Executive Director, Disabled People's International, and Alternative Representative Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities

Real time captioning will be available.