**Global Disability Youth Summit**

**under the auspice of the Global Disability Summit 2022**

# Background

In 2018, the first Global Disability Summit (GDS) was organized by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland government, the government of Kenya, and the International Disability Alliance. It was a historic moment for the global disability movement and the rights of persons with disabilities.

The GDS inspired unprecedented engagement in disability inclusion and generated commitments that will help deliver Agenda 2030’s vision to ‘Leave No One Behind’ as well as existing obligations under the ‘UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).[[1]](#footnote-2) More than 1000 delegates from governments, donors, private sector organisations, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) participated in the GDS in London. Additionally, the [Charter for Change](https://www.globaldisabilitysummit.org/resources/global-disability-summit-charter-for-change), the principal legacy document of the GDS, was launched, with 170 commitments made.

The Government of Norway, the Government of Ghana, the International Disability Alliance (IDA), and the Atlas Alliance will now co-host the second Global Disability Summit (GDS22) in February 2022. The event will be held online with the themes to be prioritized based on the consultations with OPDs.

For the first time, the GDS will comprise a whole day of discussions on youth with disabilities as a Global Disability Youth Summit (the GDS Youth). The aim of the GDS Youth is to raise ideas and concerns of the estimated 200 million[[2]](#footnote-3) youth with disabilities worldwide,[[3]](#footnote-4) both young adolescents and young adults, which requirements, expectations and priorities might vary. The GDS Youth is being co-hosted by IDA, Atlas Alliance, who has commissioned Youth Mental Health Norway – YMHN, and UNICEF; supported by the Government of Norway.

IDA and Atlas Alliance will through their representative role in the design and delivery of the GDS Youth ensure that it will comply with the UN CRPD. IDA as a global alliance of global and regional members along with their national members and its representative Youth Committee and Youth Caucus, the Atlas Alliance as a network of Norwegian DPOs with partner DPOs in the Global South working on inclusive development and humanitarian action. UNICEF will use its role as a key stakeholder in the promotion of the rights of children and youth with disabilities worldwide.

# Proposed Objectives

The GDS Youth will draw attention to the topics that are particularly important for youth with disabilities such as participation of youth in OPDs and youth mainstream organizations, inclusive education, deinstitutionalization and community inclusion, access to employment, climate change, new technologies, humanitarian action, access to inclusive healthcare including sexual reproductive health and mental health, among others.

It also aims to accelerate the involvement of youth with disabilities in the implementation of the CRPD and the realization of the Agenda 2030 by raising awareness on the importance of their active participation in policymaking.

Furthermore, specific objectives are:

* Meaningful participation of diverse stakeholders including states representatives, UN Agencies, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), agencies for development and cooperation, youth CSOs and other interested parties, including at country and regional levels in discussions led by youth with disabilities

• Contributing to a broader goal of shifting attitudes towards youth with disabilities and recognition of them as agents of change in implementation of the CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals,

• Showcasing progress, and good practices on inclusion and empowerment of youth with disabilities, specifically including showcases from underrepresented groups, such as girls and women with disabilities, people with intellectual, psychosocial, disabilities, people with deafblindness, autistic people and minority and indigenous youth with disabilities, among others.

• Mobilizing targeted and concrete commitments and stressing accountability towards the inclusion of youth with disabilities in development, human rights and humanitarian actions,

• Strengthening capacity of organizations of persons with disabilities in the Global South to have a strategy on youth and to foster their engagement with governments,

• Mobilizing the critical mass of youth with disabilities in line with the principle of “leaving no one behind” following the CRPD principles of “nothing about us without us”.

# Decision making and planning process among Co-hosts

IDA, Atlas Alliance (represented by YMHN), and UNICEF comprise the decision-making mechanism of the GDS Youth and will be responsible to oversee the arrangements and the implementation of the event.

The co-hosts will be responsible for monitoring the activities leading up to the GDS Youth, approving the agenda, consulting global and regional youth organizations (youth OPDs) or networks to arrive at prioritized thematic areas, mobilizing youth with disabilities and their representative organizations/ networks, deciding on speakers and inviting attendees from the civil society, private sector, governments, UN agencies, communicating about the event and to financially support the decisions made about the event (according to each agencies commitments).

Regional working groups of youth with disabilities will be assembled by the co-hosts, which would be comprised of IDA Youth Committee and Caucus, Atlas/ YMHN partners, UNICEF youth networks and partners, and other partners that would be invited under agreement by all co-hosts.

It is essential to ensure the representation of youth with disabilities and their organizations demographically and geographically, including countries in regions that are generally underrepresented and marginalized, i.e. Sub-Saharan Africa, and especially populous and geographically sizable countries i.e. China, Russia and India.

The working groups will propose thematic areas of particular importance to youth in the relevant region. The co-hosts will consider all collected suggestions to thematic areas, narrow down the list if needed and decide the final topics that will be retained. Depth rather than width is advantageous considering the short time available per context/region. Regional surveys and/or Facebook vote collection are also being discussed as a way of ensuring participation and influencing the final decision.

# The Virtual GDS Youth – Regional events and thematic discussions

In order to ensure that no youth with disabilities is left behind in the discussion of their priorities as well as to draw the attention of youth mainstream communities and other allies, the GDS Youth is envisaged to have 2 hours sessions per region, consecutively, and thematic discussions as breakout discussions in between the regional sessions.

This would result in a ‘virtual 24 hours world tour’ with various time slots (one per region), according to their own time zone, using IDA’s online Zoom platform.

While the regional events will be tailored to the priorities the specific regions would like to be showcased, there will also be thematic discussions in between the regional activities.

A detailed “show plan” for all the 24 hours will be written by the co-hosts once the consultations are finished and overall themes and thematic areas per region are decided upon.

# Potential Thematic Areas of the GDS Youth

• Engagement of OPDs, working on youth, as effective partners for development

• Inclusive education including remote learning in times of COVID 19

• Intersection of climate change, disability inclusion and youth participation

• Employment and economic empowerment

• Engagement of youth OPDs, self-advocacy groups and informal youth networks

• Combating ableism stigma and discrimination

• Living independently and community support systems

• Inclusive physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights

• Youth in humanitarian action

• Technology and access to assistive devices for youth with disabilities

• Inclusive sport as recreation and professions for youth with disabilities

A series of youth regional and national consultations are taking place ahead of the GDS Youth being organized by IDA alongside other events, supported by UNICEF and other key partners. In each of these events, there will be a space for youth with disabilities to engage, raise their ideas and opinions.

# Commitments

Commitments for different stakeholders will be prepared ahead of the GDS Youth with the inputs from all the ‘regional working groups’ and organized ahead of the GDS Youth, being also informed by IDA’s regional and national consultations.

The GDS secretariat will be requested to incorporate the ‘Youth Commitments’ within the official “GDS 2022 Menu of Commitments”. GDS Secretariat will support in raising awareness about the ‘Youth Commitments’ with various stakeholders.

States, UN Agencies, INGOs, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), and other stakeholders will be invited to endorse and adopt the Commitments. These commitments can be a reference point for the CRPD Committee when they examine CRPD implementation by member states.

# Youth Charter for Change

# A working group consisting of co-hosts and selected partners will be responsible for developing a Youth Charter for Change (title tbc) - summing up and challenging the commitments. The Charter will be handed over to the hosts of the GDS High-level Meeting during the first half of the first day of the GDS (on the 16th of February).

The Charter will be structured according to the main themes of the GDS Youth and serve as a common departure to frame the event as priorities set by youth with disabilities – who are active, dynamic agents of change, and forward-looking subjects of their human rights.

# The Charter will serve as a valuable tool for advocacy work. Efforts will be made to map the cross-cutting and regional themes to the broader rubric of the documents made by the GDS-cohosts.

# Expected outcomes

* Development of Commitments addressing different stakeholders, relevant to youth with disabilities across the world,
* Strengthening the movement of youth with disabilities at the national, regional and global levels,
* Concrete involvement of OPDs to embody the ideas and concerns of youth in their advocacy,
* A Youth Charter for Change will also be developed and delivered during the GDS Youth and used in future advocacy efforts.

# Partners

UK government, Sightsavers, African Union, European Union, CREA, Mobility International, USA, Disability Rights Fund/Disability Rights Advocacy Fund, International Women’s Rights Action Watch, Include Me Too, Minority Rights Group International, Leonard Chesire, Forum of Mozambican Association for Disabled People, UWEZO Youth Empowerment, the Youth Special Envoy, other Youth chapters of OPDs, INGOs, UN agencies, and governments would be invited or welcome as partners.

# Tentative structure of the event

Beginning the 13th of February 2022, there will be 05 (five) regional sessions, of two-hour each, allotted for different time zones, from the Pacific, passing subsequently by Asia, Europe and Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Africa, concluding in the Americas.

These two-hour sessions will be designed by the regional working groups and would be approved by the 03 (three) co-hosts of the GDS Youth.

A thematic round table on a specific thematic area of the GDS Youth would be held in between 02 (two) regional sessions.

The GDS Youth Menu of Commitments and the Youth Charter for Change will be published during the GDS Youth, at a time considered convenient for the majority of regions involved.

A social media campaign to generate interest and registrations for the GDS Youth as well as to broadcast the ideas for commitments will be launched from January 2022.

# Communications and Accessibility

Co-hosts commit to do their best to provide simultaneous interpretation in English as well as the major regional languages, as well as International Sign and closed captioning in English. Other accommodation may be considered upon request.

# Contact

For further information, please contact Güler Koca, gkoca@ida-secretariat.org, Sandra Olsen, sandra.olsen@mhu.no or Sarah Musau, smusau@unicef.org

1. See [www.globaldisabilitysummit.org/resources/global-disability-summit-2-years-progress-on-implementation-of-commitments](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CTchaurea%5CDownloads%5Cwww.globaldisabilitysummit.org%5Cresources%5Cglobal-disability-summit-2-years-progress-on-implementation-of-commitments) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [www.un.org/development/desa/youth/youth-with-disabilities.html](http://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/youth-with-disabilities.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The event follows the definition of youth under the African Youth Charter to be those between 15 and 35 years of age. <https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7789-treaty-0033_-_african_youth_charter_e.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)