

**Global Disability Summit 2022 Side Events**

**Shedding Light on Disability Rights in the UNESCO’s Global Anti-discrimination Agenda**

**UNESCO’s Proposal**

17 February 2022, 5h30-6h45 pm Central Europe (Geneva time)

Various forms of direct and indirect discrimination, targeting individuals and populations based on their ethnicity, origin, identity (including cultural and religious), gender, age, socioeconomic status, disability, inter alia, have continued to proliferate in societies, normalized these social ills, and exacerbated inequalities and exclusion.

Such transversal discriminations have affected more particularly persons with disabilities around the globe, especially since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many reports have shown that these groups of the populations have been disproportionately impacted by the related restriction measures, and have been excluded from many basic services including education and healthcare, denied access to information, and marginalized with stigma and harmful beliefs.[[1]](#footnote-1)In particular, evidence shows that women and girls with disabilities face higher risks of sexual and physical violence than those without disabilities, in addition to poorer access to quality healthcare and family planning, higher rates of illiteracy and lack of access to the Internet – all of which was further exacerbated by the pandemic.[[2]](#footnote-2)

In 2020, UNESCO Member States launched a “Global Call against Racism” and UNESCO is developing a Global Roadmap to fight against racism and discrimination across its fields of competence, which include Inclusive Education, Sciences for development and mutual understanding, Culture, and Communication and Universal access to information. This global initiative has placed at its core the concepts of inclusion, and equality,– thereby raising a broader question on **how the principle of inclusion as advanced by the disability movements for many years should now be further enacted in global endeavors to achieve the 2030 Agenda**.

This Panel will seek to discuss why and how it is essential to integrate the disability rights in the Global Roadmap on Anti-Racism and Non-Discrimination that UNESCO is elaborating. More specifically, how can Education, Sciences, Arts, Culture, and Communication advance disability inclusion in the Roadmap?

Some key questions will be:

* Why UNESCO has taken the lead to elaborate an Anti-Discrimination Roadmap? What is new, what are the constants? By a UNESCO Representative.
* How disability inclusion will/should be addressed under various lenses (gender, race, AI, COVID-19, poverty, etc.)? By an international Expert on disability inclusion/anti-racism, or OPD.

1. UNESCO, [*Rapid Assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on Persons with disabilities in Zimbabwe*](https://en.unesco.org/news/assessment-shows-persons-disabilities-zimbabwe-experience-severe-impact-covid-19), and [*in Malawi*](https://en.unesco.org/news/covid-19-severely-affects-persons-disabilities-malawi-unesco-report), February 2021; UNESCO, [When Schools Shut](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379270), October 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ## [UN/DESA Policy Brief #69](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/un-desa-policy-brief-69-leaving-no-one-behind-the-covid-19-crisis-through-the-disability-and-gender-lens/): “Leaving no one behind: the COVID-19 crisis through the disability and gender lens”

   [↑](#footnote-ref-2)