



# CUMBRE REGIONAL DE AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE SOBRE LA DISCAPACIDAD

Rio de Janeiro • Brasil  
9 al 11 de diciembre **2024**

 ORGANIZADO POR:



 CON EL APOYO DE:



**+ UNIDOS,  
+ INCLUSIVOS**

**FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE REGIONAL SUMMIT:  
URGENT CALLS TO ACTION FROM  
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**



## CONTEXT: LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SUMMIT

The full and effective inclusion of persons with disabilities in society remains a global challenge that demands innovative solutions and sustained commitment. In this context, the Global Disability Summit (GDS), established in 2017, emerges as a unique mechanism to advance inclusive development and humanitarian action, particularly in the Global South. Summits are not isolated events, but rather part of an ongoing movement that drives concrete and sustainable action. In this sense, the upcoming Global Disability Summit, scheduled for April 2025 in Berlin, Germany, represents a significant step forward toward a more inclusive future. The main purpose of GDS 2025 is to close the gap between inclusion and development cooperation. Through this mechanism, the goal is not only to bring together global stakeholders but also to ensure that the voices of persons with disabilities are heard and their rights are realized.

In this regard, it is essential to clarify that SPM is not limited to a declaration of intent; its impact is measured by concrete action and the ability to translate commitments into effective public policies. The experience of previous summits (2018 and 2022) has demonstrated the power of this collaborative model, generating fruitful dialogue between governments, civil society organizations, people with disabilities, and international experts. This exchange of knowledge and experiences has been essential for identifying best practices, overcoming obstacles, and promoting the implementation of inclusive policies at the national and regional levels. Thus, the Global Disability Summit not only advocates for inclusion, but also provides the tools and mechanisms to make it a reality.

With the aim of expanding participation and collaborating on structuring joint work platforms, pre-summits or regional summits were organized for both the 2025 summit and the 2022 summit. The Regional Summits have diverse purposes and a clear focus: they aim not only to generate new commitments at both the regional and national levels, but also to increase the visibility of inclusive development in each area. These events also allow the themes and goals of the Global Disability Summit to be adapted to the specificities of each region, thus facilitating the presentation of relevant commitments and promoting meaningful collaboration.

The 2nd Latin American and Caribbean Regional Summit on Disabilities, organized by the



Latin American Network of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families (RIADIS), the International Disability Alliance (IDA), and the Reference Center for Inclusive Education (CREI), with the support of governments and international organizations, established itself as a strategic forum for addressing the specific realities of the region. Despite legislative progress and the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Latin America and the Caribbean still face significant challenges in achieving the full inclusion of persons with disabilities. The persistence of discrimination, lack of access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and employment, as well as architectural and communication barriers, are just some of the obstacles that limit the full participation in social, economic, and political life of the 85 million people with disabilities in the region, which translates to a total of approximately 195 million people if we include their families (World Bank, 2021). Therefore, this Regional Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from December 9 to 11, 2024, was designed as a space for dialogue and collaboration to critically analyze the progress made and the challenges ahead in the region, focusing on the following strategic objectives:

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

1. Promote the full and meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities in their local and regional contexts by identifying and addressing the specific challenges they face, creating a collaborative space where concrete and sustainable solutions can be built that respond to their real and urgent needs. This allows for the participation of persons with disabilities in diverse spaces, including decision-making, with their interventions based on their capacities.
2. Facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices among countries in the region.
3. Prepare for participation in the Global Summit by identifying and prioritizing urgent issues for people with disabilities in the region.



## PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

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This document brings together the main conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the discussions, conferences, and dialogues held during the three (3) days of the summit. It also constitutes a call to action addressed to States, international organizations, the private sector, and other relevant actors, urging them to make concrete commitments that promote the effective inclusion and full respect for the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as the appreciation of diversity through an intersectional approach .

In addition to the challenges discussed, this document highlights the importance of strengthening regional and intersectoral partnerships, recognizing that progress in the inclusion of persons with disabilities requires active and ongoing cooperation. Social participation must be a cross-cutting axis in public policies and development programs, with the incorporation of disability from a human rights perspective in all areas and in an intersectional manner , promoting specific interventions, particularly in the case of persons with multiple disabilities, women, children and adolescents, youth, persons living in poverty and extreme vulnerability, people living on the margins of society, refugees, and members of indigenous communities with disabilities.

Under these theoretical premises, twenty (20) keynote presentations were delivered at the summit on four specific topics: inclusive education, decent and sustainable employment, social protection, and the impact of climate change along with risk management. It is worth noting that these topics were selected based on prior consultations with grassroots organizations and regional socio-historical analysis. The contributions of the participants, which provide the basis for this document, were carefully systematized according to the question and answer spaces developed after each presentation, as well as from the contributions made post-summit , through a digital mechanism designed for this purpose.

Finally, it is important to note that this document not only represents the proposal of Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of the 2025 Global Summit on Disability, but should also be considered a framework for monitoring and following up on the commitments made by the region's stakeholders. This includes monitoring the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, through the Decade's Action Program, as well as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the recently approved Pact for



the Future. Likewise, it is essential to integrate the Sendai framework into this context, since one of its axes is Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and climate change, placing people living in situations or conditions of vulnerability, including people with disabilities, at the center of management .

## CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS



Two hundred ninety-one people (291) gathered in person in Rio to participate in the Regional Summit. Seventy percent of them identified themselves as people with disabilities.

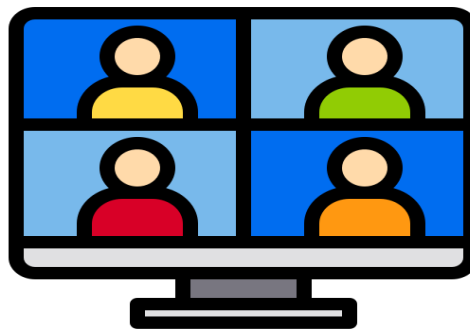
### TYPES OF DISABILITY

Of the total number of participants with disabilities, 32% identified themselves as having a physical or motor disability, 24% as deaf, 22% as blind, 11% as having an intellectual disability, 7% as having some psychosocial disability, and 4% as deaf-blind.



### ONLINE VISUALIZATIONS

Approximately 1,257 views were recorded over the three days of the event. The live broadcast in Spanish was carried out on the RIADIS *YouTube channel* , and the Portuguese broadcast was carried out through the official account of the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship of the Government of Brazil.



### TYPE OF ORGANIZATION



In total, one hundred and thirty-four (134) organizations participated, of which 77% (103) were Organizations of and for people with Disabilities, mostly with a local field of action. 10% (13) were governmental organizations, 7% (10) humanitarian organizations and agencies, 4% (5) academic institutions, and 2% (3) were representatives of private companies and people without association affiliation.





## PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

The nationalities of the participants were as follows: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Panama, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Belize, Peru, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Venezuela, Spain and the United States.



## PARTICIPANTS BY SEX

Finally, it is noteworthy that, of the total number of participants with a disability, 60% identified themselves as female.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR URGENT ACTION

### INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

**Action 1. Eliminating barriers in the education system** . Eradicate barriers to access for persons with disabilities to education systems, including attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers, in line with the CRPD, the SDGs, and the Compact for the Future.

**Action 2. Allocate budget and investment for universal design and reasonable accommodation** . Promote the adoption of universal design principles in curricula, materials, and infrastructure to adapt to diverse learning needs, as well as allocate the necessary budget to ensure reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities.



**Action 3. Training of Educators and other professionals working in educational settings:** Invest in training for principals and educators to create inclusive classrooms that address the specific needs of students with disabilities; in addition to promoting the development of support and oversight mechanisms for the school inclusion process that guarantee its sustainability and effective educational traceability.

**Action 4. Training in family environments and inclusive education :** Train family members in understanding disability, emphasizing their responsibility to guarantee the right to education for their children with disabilities. This involves supporting families in the process of inclusion and coexistence, as well as providing them with the necessary tools to support their children's social development and autonomy throughout their childhood, adolescence, and youth.

**Action 5. Participation of children and adolescents in decision-making** . Promote the active participation of children and adolescents with disabilities in the design of educational policies, in order to ensure that solutions are more effective and tailored to their real requirements , as well as to strengthen their sense of belonging and empowerment to develop leadership skills, defend rights, and contribute to a more equitable society.

**Action 6. Implementation of plain language as an accessibility resource :** Promote the use of plain language as a fundamental tool to ensure the inclusion of persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities in all spheres of life. This entails investing in adapting educational materials, public information, social protection programs, and job placement processes to an accessible and understandable format. The absence of this resource excludes a significant proportion of persons with disabilities, limiting their access to basic rights and development opportunities.

**Action 7. Inclusive Education and Sexuality Education.** Promoting inclusive education that integrates sexuality education and an understanding of the diversity of sexualities is essential to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities, receive appropriate and accessible information. This entails developing educational programs that respect the specificities of each group and foster respect for diversity. It is also essential to implement specific programs that address preventive care for sexually transmitted diseases and methods to avoid early and unwanted pregnancies. By ensuring that sexuality education is part of the inclusive curriculum, students are empowered to understand their





rights, establish healthy relationships, and make informed decisions about their sexuality.

**Action 8. Participation of DPOs in the educational model.** Include Organizations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) in curriculum design and educational evaluation, ensuring that their expertise in specific educational requirements is valued. This involves adapting educational plans to diverse disability situations, promoting inclusive learning that responds to the realities of all students.

## IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

**Action 9. Accessible early warning systems:** Develop and implement inclusive and accessible early warning systems for various threats, involving persons with disabilities in the design and evaluation of these mechanisms. This involves ensuring that the information and messages conveyed through them are clear and tailored to the different communication needs of each group, thus facilitating understanding and an effective response to risk situations.

**Action 10. Inclusion of disability in planning:** Ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in the development of national and local disaster risk management plans, with the aim of mitigating risks and reducing adverse impacts arising from climate change. It is essential that persons with disabilities be included in the formulation of measures and actions taken to avoid disproportionate impacts, thus ensuring that their perspectives and needs are considered in all planning processes.

**Action 11. Resilient Infrastructure:** It is essential to develop infrastructure that is not only resilient to climate disasters but also ensures accessibility for all persons with disabilities. To achieve this, it is important to integrate all aspects of accessibility and prioritize projects in communities with high vulnerable populations, ensuring that these efforts reach those most in need. Furthermore, it is critical that all infrastructure developments are aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 11 and 13, which promote the creation of resilient cities and effective action to address climate change, so that all projects provide significant benefits to the community as a whole.

**Action 12. Capacity building:** Promote the allocation of resources and investment in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery strategies tailored to the diverse needs of persons with disabilities.



**Action 13. Promoting Inclusive Protocols :** Promote the development of inclusive protocols for anticipatory actions against threats, with the aim of increasing the resilience of persons with disabilities and reducing the risk of harm and loss among the most vulnerable groups. This includes ensuring that health, water, sanitation, and housing conditions are adequate and accessible for persons with disabilities, ensuring that the measures adopted are effective and respond to their specific needs.

**Action 14. Participation in the global environmental agenda :** Promote access to participation of persons with disabilities and their intersectionalities in the environmental agenda, climate justice and the just energy transition in all international political spaces, guaranteeing accessibility, plain language and other resources to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities .

#### DECENT AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

**Action 15. Formulation of inclusive labor market policies :** Implement policies that eliminate discrimination and guarantee equal access to employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, recognizing that employment is a human right and an essential means of livelihood.

**Action 16. Labor market access mechanisms.** Guarantee the reservation of quotas and the creation of mechanisms that allow for the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the development, implementation, and evaluation of these policies. To this end, it is essential that States establish annual targets for the hiring of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors, accompanied by periodic compliance reports, which will ensure a continued commitment to inclusion. Furthermore, it is essential to guarantee accessibility and reasonable accommodations as part of their rights, which will allow for full autonomy and effective work performance for persons with disabilities.

**Action 17. Support for SMEs led by persons with disabilities:** Promote, recognize, and support the establishment and leadership of small and medium-sized enterprises led by persons with disabilities, mothers of persons with disabilities, and socially vulnerable groups, prioritizing financial literacy training initiatives and promoting inclusive procurement and tendering processes that consider diversity and inclusion in their policies and action frameworks.

**Action 18. Promoting labor inclusion in public institutions :** Ensure that disability-related institutions in the various States have a workforce comprised of at least 70% persons with disabilities, thus guaranteeing



sustainable access to and inclusion in the labor market. This entails establishing clear policies that promote the hiring of persons with disabilities at all levels of these institutions, eliminating any barriers that impede their incorporation. Achieving this significant representation seeks not only to foster diversity in the workplace but also to ensure that the specific needs and approaches of persons with disabilities are considered in the formulation of policies and programs, contributing to a more just and equitable society.

**Action 19. Development of job skills:** Promote training programs for people with disabilities, aligned with the new demands of an evolving labor market .

**Action 20. Corporate Responsibility :** Engage the private sector to adopt inclusive hiring practices and support workplace accommodations.

**Action 21. Promoting Policies for the Regularization of Informal Work :** Promote policies that regulate current "informal" work spaces, generating guarantees that protect both the lives and income of people with disabilities. This implies establishing legal frameworks that recognize and dignify work performed under these conditions, ensuring fundamental labor rights. Likewise, encouraging collective organizational practices and incorporating people with disabilities into social security systems, not only in the health care field but also in accessing the right to retirement through monthly state contributions, will allow them to have a secure budget in their old age, thus guaranteeing their well-being and economic stability.

## SOCIAL PROTECTION

**Action 22. Ensure coverage of additional costs related to disability.** Establish comprehensive and inclusive social protection systems for persons with disabilities that address poverty and inequality, taking into account the additional costs faced by persons with disabilities.

**Action 23. Promote the development of comprehensive social protection systems.** Promote comprehensive social protection systems. Ensure that social protection schemes, such as cash transfers and health care, are accessible and meet the specific needs of persons with disabilities throughout their lives.

**Action 24. Crisis Adaptation :** Integrate a disability perspective into emergency social protection measures during crises such as pandemics, wars, and economic recessions.



**Action 25. Promoting dignity, autonomy, and independent living.** Ensure that the agenda for building care and support systems adopts an intersectional perspective that incorporates the principles of international human rights law for persons with disabilities and older persons, especially the right to independent living, to be included in the community, and to make their own decisions, in line with the social model of human rights. Persons with disabilities and older persons must be actively involved in the design, management, and monitoring of care and support systems. To this end, accessibility conditions and individualized reasonable adjustments that also consider intercultural factors must be provided.

**Action 26. Caregiving-Centered Care Policy :** Implement social protection policies that recognize and support caregivers of persons with disabilities, who are mostly family members, especially women, and face overburden, aging, and health risks due to their full-time work. These policies should include training programs, financial support, and access to health services for caregivers, ensuring their well-being and ability to continue providing quality care.

#### EMERGING CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

**Action 27. Data Collection :** Promote investment in initiatives to map, update, and monitor data on persons with disabilities, ensuring disaggregated data collection by disability, age, gender, and ethnicity , as a key strategy for understanding the challenges faced by persons with disabilities. Strengthening the accuracy and comprehensiveness of these data is critical to enabling more effective allocation of resources and budgets. Ensuring detailed data is collected to facilitate the design of targeted interventions that truly impact and respond to the needs of persons with disabilities is essential. This data-driven approach will promote more inclusive and effective policymaking, ensuring that each group receives appropriate and timely attention in their quest for equality and opportunities.

**Action 28. Implement concrete actions to combat ableism :** Develop and implement specific policies and programs that address and eliminate ableist practices in all areas, including education, employment, health, and social participation. This includes the creation of protocols against disability discrimination in public and private institutions, mandatory anti-ableism training for public officials and employees, and the promotion of inclusive audits that identify and correct attitudinal and structural barriers.



**Action 29. Eradication of violence and protection of persons with disabilities** : Implement effective actions to prevent and address violence against persons with disabilities, with special attention to children with intellectual disabilities, who are more vulnerable to abuse and often face discredit due to ableism . This includes developing educational programs that use simple language and accessible tools to teach children to identify and protect themselves from risky situations, as well as strengthening reporting and care systems to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to protection and justice mechanisms. In addition, it is essential to train officials, caregivers and communities in the identification and prevention of violence, promoting safe and discrimination-free environments for all persons with disabilities .

**Action 30. Intersectional Perspective** . Promote the inclusion of the intersectional perspective of social markers (race/color/ethnicity, gender, generation, income, place of residence and nature of disability) to effectively interpret the various risk situations faced by persons with disabilities, including circumstances of human rights violations, in order to guarantee adequate and effective responses.

**Action 31. Support for organizations of persons with disabilities ( OPDs )** : It is essential to enhance training and funding opportunities for OPDs , as they are the entities responsible for advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities. Strengthening their organizational and operational capacity ensures more effective representation in decision-making affecting this group. Furthermore, increasing investment in these organizations will allow for the development of initiatives that promote inclusion and respect for human rights, ensuring that the voices of persons with disabilities are heard and valued in all spheres of society.

**Action 32. Women with Disabilities.** Ensure that all women with disabilities have access to information, social conditions, support and care networks, accessible health care, and economic opportunities so they can make individual and consensual choices regarding the exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights, family planning, treatments, and surgical interventions.

**Action 33. Inclusion and meaningful participation of persons of African descent with disabilities** : Promote policies that ensure the full





inclusion of persons of African descent with disabilities in all aspects of social, cultural, and political life. It is essential to recognize that their active participation is essential for the development of an equitable society. This includes establishing mechanisms that guarantee their voice in the formulation and evaluation of public policies.

**Action 34. Participation of children, adolescents, and young people with disabilities :** It is crucial to ensure that children, adolescents, and young people with disabilities have access to funding and fully participate in decision-making processes in all spheres of society. By eradicating adult-centrism and ableism , they will be empowered to advocate for their human rights and, at the same time, discuss and propose solutions to problems that affect them both directly and indirectly. This inclusion not only ensures that their voices are heard, but also promotes an inclusive approach that challenges traditional dynamics, positioning young people as active leaders in their communities and the region.

**Action 35. Visibility and Meaningful Participation of Indigenous Persons with Disabilities:** It is imperative to implement strong measures to ensure the full inclusion of Indigenous persons with disabilities in all aspects of public and community life. This requires, in addition to the recognition of their rights, the creation of spaces for political participation that allow them to effectively influence public policies that affect them.

**Action 36. Inclusion and participation of the LGBTQIA+ community with disabilities :** It is essential to create spaces for meaningful participation for the LGBTQIA+ community with disabilities, ensuring that their voices are heard and their experiences are integrated at all levels of society. This involves recognizing the intersectionality of their identities and establishing platforms where they can make their unique challenges visible and influence the creation of public policies.

**Action 37. Participation and political leadership of persons with disabilities:** Ensure not only active participation but also the political leadership of persons with disabilities in public and political life. This entails eliminating physical, social, and cultural barriers that limit their access to decision-making spaces and actively promoting their inclusion in leadership and decision-making positions. It is essential to create training and mentoring programs that prepare persons with disabilities for political roles, as well as establishing quotas or affirmative action measures that ensure their equitable representation in public and private institutions. Only through genuine political leadership can we ensure





that policies and decisions reflect the needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities, moving toward a truly inclusive society.

**Action 38. Scientific Research .** Promote scientific research aimed at improving the production of support systems such as digital Braille, sign language, and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), among others, with the goal of ensuring the effective participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.

**Action 39. Promoting digital and technological accessibility :** Implement initiatives to ensure that all digital platforms, including government websites, public service applications, and social media, are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. This includes compliance with international standards such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and promoting digital literacy for persons with disabilities.

**Action 40. Building Cultural Citizenship .** Work to promote cultural citizenship for persons with disabilities as a significant element in promoting human rights and sustainable development, emphasizing the scope of cultural rights in the 2030 Agenda as a cross-cutting and articulating element among the SDGs.

**Action 41. Allocation of resources for development.** Establish appropriate mechanisms, based on Article 32 of the CRPD, to ensure the inclusion of disabilities in international development financing, bearing in mind that the global population with disabilities reaches 15%.

**Action 42. Recognition of essential roles for inclusion :** Recognizing the roles of guide interpreters, mediators, sign language interpreters, and shadow teachers is essential to ensuring the inclusion of deaf and deafblind people in education and in access to other rights, such as employment. Therefore, it is crucial to establish a regulatory framework that values and regulates these roles, ensuring their ongoing training and professionalization.