

IRIAD-The Electoral Hub Commemorate
International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) 2020
Theme: Building Back Better: Toward a Disability-Inclusive, Accessible and
Sustainable Post COVID-19 World

A disability is any condition of the body or mind that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities and interact with the world around them¹.

There are many types of disabilities, such as those that affect a person's vision, movement, thinking, remembering, learning, communication, hearing, mental health, and social relationships.

Persons with disabilities (PWDs), according to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities, include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

From the CDC, according to the World Health Organization, disability has three dimensions²:

- **Impairment:** this could be structural or functional or both. Examples include loss of limb, and vision. Impairment affects a person's body structure or function, or mental functioning.
- **Activity limitation:** includes difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking, or problem solving.
- **Participation restrictions:** includes restriction in normal daily activities, such as working, engaging in social and recreational activities.

These three dimensions highlight the fact that it is the interaction between a person's impairment and societal barriers that brings about disability. Therefore, it is the responsibility of society to provide facilities and services to allow for the full and effective participation of people with impairment. The IDPD seeks to address this by mobilizing support for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, promoting awareness-raising about disability issues and drawing attention to the benefits of an inclusive and accessible society for all.

It aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

As rightly noted by the UN, "disability inclusion is an essential condition to upholding human rights, sustainable development, and peace and security"³. Persons with disabilities have poor access to health care, education, employment and to participate in the community. The conscious and

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/disability.html>

² Ibid

³ <https://www.un.org/en/observances/day-of-persons-with-disabilities>

inclusivity approach advocated by the IDPD is required to ensure that persons with disabilities are not left behind. Hence, the commitment to realizing the rights of persons with disabilities is not only a matter of justice but an investment in a common future.

People living with disability should like every other person have access to basic resources; they should be allowed to effectively participate in electoral processes and democracy.

As the world passes through and recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, the rights of people with disabilities should be accounted for in order to achieve an all-inclusive society.

As a way to commemorate this year's International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD), IRIAD is lending her voice with that of the international communities to create awareness and inform members of the society that people with disabilities have human rights and should not be discriminated against. Instead, they should be allowed to participate fully in the society in order to have an all-inclusive society that we crave for.

Signed

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