

South Africa



EasyRead version



The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights** is part of the United Nations. They make sure that everyone in the world is treated fairly and has their rights respected.



The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the South African Department of Women, Youth and Person with Disabilities asked an independent person to write this report.



This report is about what happened to people with disabilities in South Africa during COVID-19 up until February 2021.

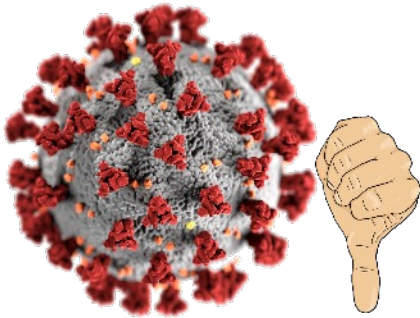


Life is already hard for many people with disabilities in the world.



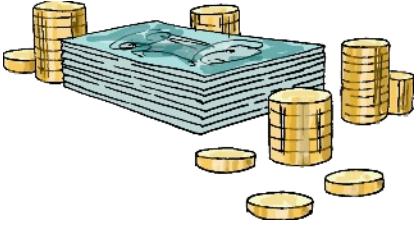
In South Africa:

- people with disabilities often don't have their human rights respected



- COVID-19 has made this much worse.

What helped people with disabilities during the COVID-19 emergency?



Some people with disabilities got emergency money for food and other important things they needed.

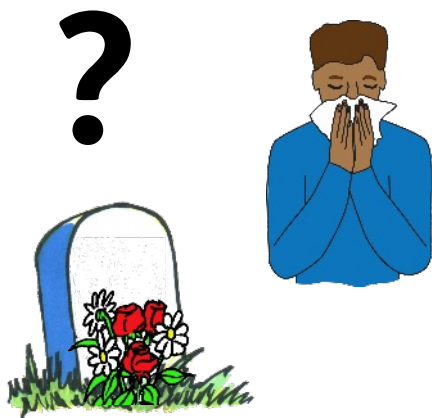


Donations of food and items to keep people clean and safe from COVID-19 were given to people with disabilities.

What happened to people with disabilities during the COVID-19 emergency?

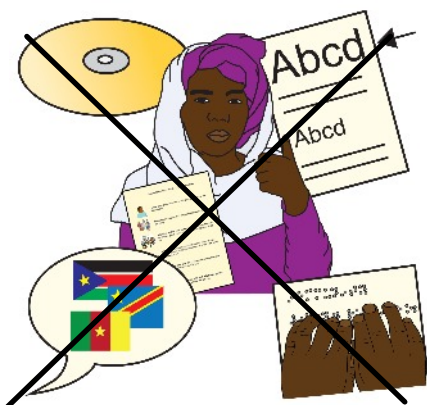


Many people in South Africa have died from COVID-19.



South Africa is not sure exactly how many people with disabilities:

- got sick from COVID-19
- died from COVID-19.



Accessible ways to talk to people with disabilities

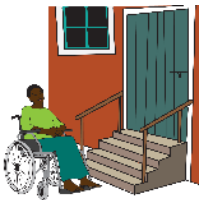
The government has not done a good job with accessible information during the COVID-19 emergency.



There was some information that used sign language.

COVID-19 testing

There were many problems getting a COVID-19 test:

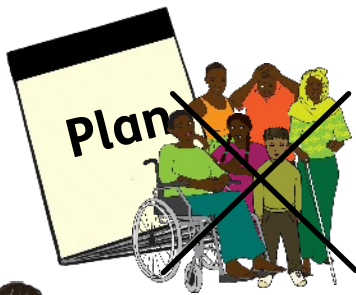


- access to testing
- access to transport
- some places had long lines
- some tests cost too much
- not being able to lip read through masks
- test results were hard to understand for some people.



Involving everyone

People with disabilities and organisations were not asked about what people with disabilities needed and how to help them during the COVID-19 emergency.



Plans were made that:

- didn't include people with disabilities
- were not fair for people with disabilities.



Education

During COVID-19 many students with disabilities missed out on learning:

- they did not have the internet
- special schools stayed closed for much longer than other schools





- plans to open special schools didn't include some students with physical disabilities or intellectual disabilities



- some special schools are still closed.



Health care

Some health care decisions made during COVID-19 were not fair for people with disabilities.

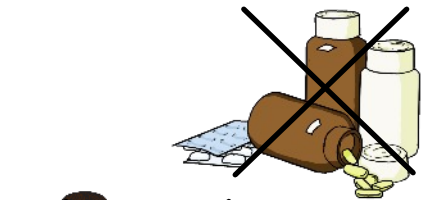


We are not sure how many people this might have happened to.

During the COVID-19 emergency people with disabilities found it hard:



- to get general health care

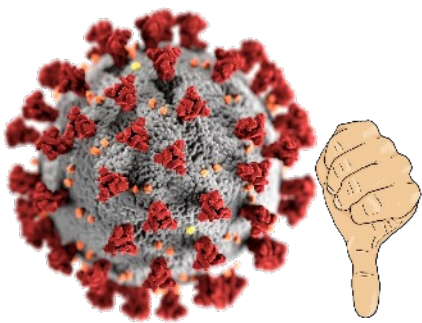


- to get the medicines they needed
- to get other treatments to keep them healthy
- to get aides like wheelchairs
- to use online health checks.



Women and children with disabilities

Many women and children in South Africa do not have protection from abuse and violence in the home.



COVID-19 made this worse.

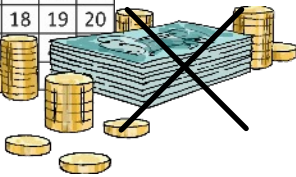


Reporting abuse and violence in South Africa has problems. COVID-19 made this worse.

Money and support

Many people with disabilities who usually got government money to help them live:

December 2020						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24			
28	29	30	31			



- missed out when their money stopped being paid to them in December 2020
- had to go to medical checks to try to ask for money and were not able to socially distance at the medical checks.

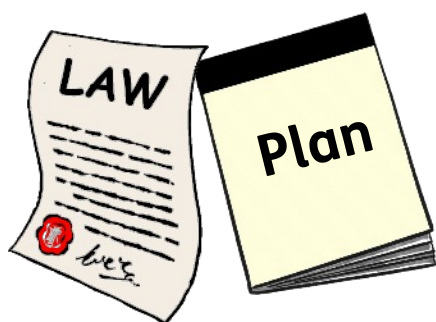


What we think should happen in South Africa

The Government should:

Collect, keep and share information about how many people with disabilities:

- live in South Africa
- get COVID-19
- die from COVID-19
- have access to food
- have access to medicine
- have access to education



Use the information to make laws and plans that are fair for all people with disabilities.

Make sure people with disabilities have information during emergencies like COVID-19:



- give out information about how to stay healthy and safe in accessible ways like captioning, Easy Read and sign language.



- have free COVID-19 testing for people with disabilities.



- make sure places to get tested can be physically accessed



- give test results in accessible ways.

Keep people with disabilities and women and girls with disabilities safe from violence:



- make sure safe houses can stay open



- give training to police about the rights of people with disabilities



- make sure people with disabilities can safely report abuse.

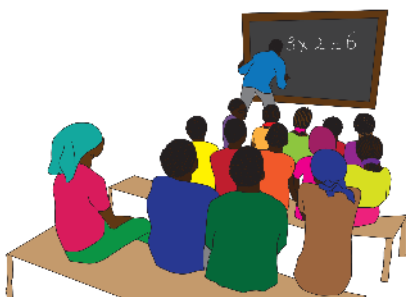


Make sure people with disabilities always have money for food, medicine and other important things they need.



Make sure people with disabilities:

- are treated fairly in health decisions during the COVID-19 emergency
- can get medicines and treatments.



Make sure people with disabilities:

- learn at school



- can learn if schools need to close again.



After COVID-19:

- make plans to help people with disabilities
- ask people with disabilities and OPDs (organisations of persons with disabilities) what should be in the plans
- think about what they say to help make the plans.



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