



# The rights of people with disabilities



**What the Special Rapporteur did over the past six years**

**Involving and including people with disabilities when countries work together on international aid programmes**



EasyRead version of:

Report on disability-inclusive international cooperation of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/75/186).





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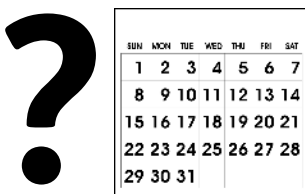
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# 1. About this report



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Every year the **Special Rapporteur** on the rights of persons with disabilities writes reports to tell the **United Nations** about **human rights** and people with disabilities.



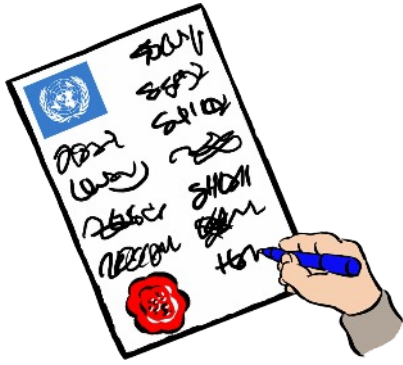
The **Special Rapporteur** is Catalina Devandas Aguilar. She helps countries understand how to make sure people with disabilities can get their **human rights**.



The **United Nations** is a group made up of 193 countries. They work together to make the world a safer place for everyone.



This is an EasyRead version of the Special Rapporteur's report about involving people with disabilities when countries work together to try to make life better for all people.



An international agreement called the United Nations **Disability Convention** says people with disabilities have the same **human rights** as everyone else.



This includes the right to be involved in decisions about your own life.



With her report the **Special Rapporteur** wants to make sure all countries follow the United Nations **Disability Convention**. This means thinking about how to involve people with disabilities in their work on human rights.



This is the last report this Special Rapporteur wrote, before a new one will be chosen in October 2020.

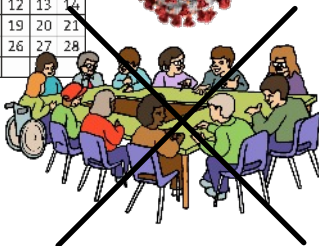
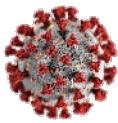


It looks at what she found out in the last 6 years about including and involving people with disabilities and making sure they get their rights respected.



Before she wrote this report the **Special Rapporteur** spoke to governments, experts, **donors**, organisations and people with disabilities. She wanted to find out what they thought about involving people with disabilities when countries work together on **aid programmes**.

June 2020						
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Because of **COVID-19**, the Special Rapporteur had to cancel a large meeting with experts in June 2020.





## 2. What the Special Rapporteur did over the past 6 years

Over the past 6 years the Special Rapporteur:



- visited 9 countries to find out about rights of people with disabilities who live there. Because of COVID-19, she could not visit Botswana and China this year



- wrote reports about these visits. There are EasyRead versions of these reports



- wrote 11 reports about different rights of children, adults and older people in the Disability Convention. There are EasyRead versions of these reports





- helped countries understand that all laws and policies should respect the rights of people with disabilities



- talked about rights of people with disabilities at conferences and meetings in different countries



- looked at better ways to collect information about rights of people with disabilities



- helped the United Nations agree a plan to be more **accessible**, to include people with disabilities and have people with disabilities working in the organisation.



The Special Rapporteur thanks all the people who helped her understand what life is like for people with disabilities. Including people with disabilities and their organisations.



She also thanks everyone at the United Nations and her team who supported her work.



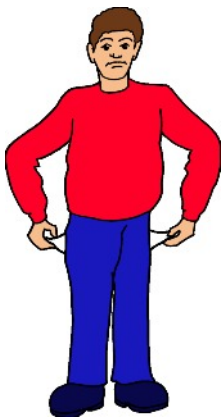
### 3. Involving people with disabilities and supporting them to get their rights respected



1 in 7 people around the world are people with disabilities.

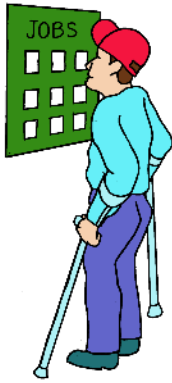


Most governments understand people with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else. But there is still **discrimination** against people with disabilities. If they are not included in planning aid programmes, people with disabilities will keep being left out.



People with disabilities often:

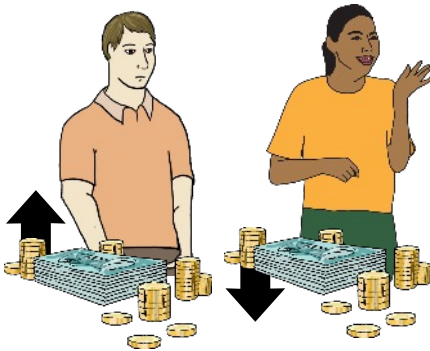
- have less money



- do not have as many chances to have a job as other people



- find it harder to use health or education services.



Things can be worse for some people with disabilities than others. Women with disabilities often have less money or support than men with disabilities.



Things like war and other emergencies affect people with disabilities worse than other people.



They have a much higher risk of catching COVID-19 and dying from the **virus**.



People with disabilities are also badly affected in accessing work, health and support services because of the pandemic.



It is really important to think about their rights and include people with disabilities in plans to try to get life back to normal.

## 4. What the Convention says



The United Nations was set up to support human rights in emergencies or when people are suffering.



The Disability Convention says countries must think about the rights of people with disabilities when they work together on international aid programmes.

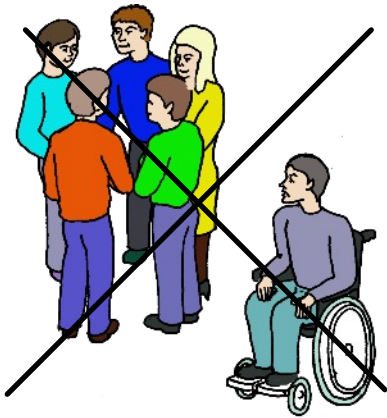


This report is about including people with disabilities when countries provide international aid.



Aid is when a government, organisation or group of countries working together, gives money or technical skills to help poorer countries or countries without these skills. Organisation that give aid are called **donors**.





Donors must make sure the countries they give money to do not discriminate against people with disabilities when they use it. For example, they should not build special schools or hospitals to keep people with disabilities away from other people.



Countries that sign the Disability Convention should work together give people with disabilities the same **human rights** as everyone else.



The Convention says governments or countries should work with other countries or donors to do these 4 things:

1. make sure all their plans and programmes are accessible and include people with disabilities





2. share information, ideas and training on human rights and how to include people with disabilities



3. work together on **research** and science and share what they learn



4. share ways for **technology** to support, help and include people with disabilities and ensure that they have the same opportunities as other people.

When countries work together, they should include organisations of people with disabilities and:



- understand they are experts who know what it is like to live with a disability



- support their human rights



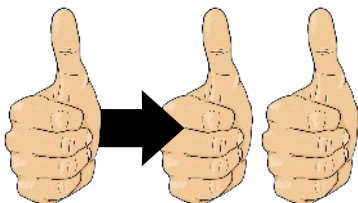
- work in accessible ways and make changes so everyone can be involved. This includes different types of communication and information



- involve people with disabilities right from the start and show how they have involved them.



Countries that sign the Disability Convention send reports to tell the United Nations what they have done. But many do not say how they have involved people with disabilities in planning and deciding how to use aid money.



Countries need to be much better at this.



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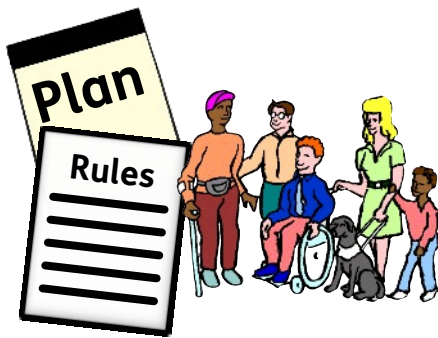
## 5. What is happening now



Some donors are good at making sure people with disabilities are included in decisions about how aid is used. But others are not.

Here are some examples.

### Plans, rules or guidelines



Only 3 in every 10 donors had plans, rules or guidelines for including people with disabilities. This is better than 2018, but still not enough.



The Disability Convention means more governments and organisations think about the rights of people with disabilities when they work together to plan international aid.

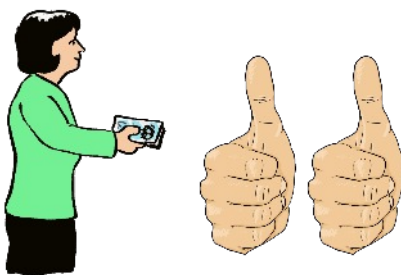


More than half the plans for people with disabilities are based on the Convention and other work the United Nations has done.



We need some plans just for people with disabilities, but they must also be included in other plans that are for everyone.

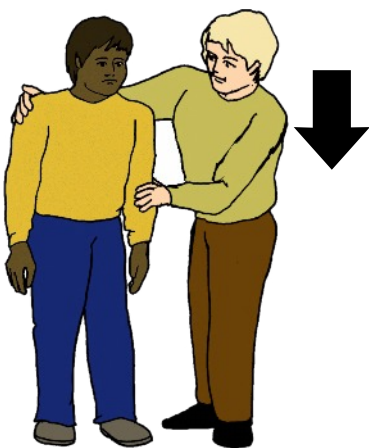
## Programmes



An aid programme is when donors give money to pay for things to make life better for people over time.



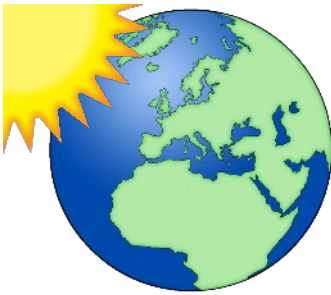
Most donors now say all programmes should include people with disabilities. Whether the programme is just for people with disabilities or to help everyone.



But many programmes only help people with physical disabilities or people who are deaf or blind. There is less help for people with learning disabilities or mental health problems.



Many programmes aim to help people with disabilities with things that give everyone the same chances in life. For example, education, healthcare, accessible places and buildings, education or having enough money.



But it is also important to include people with disabilities in programmes that look at:

- **climate change**



- **planning how to deal with disasters**

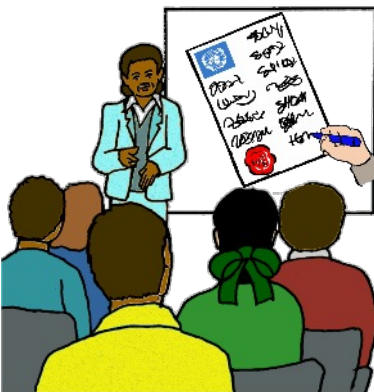


- **having enough food.**

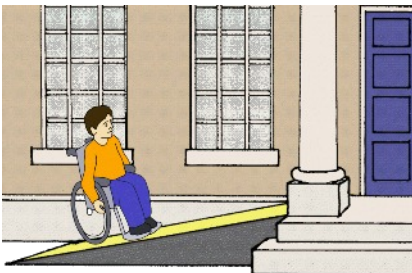




Donors must make sure their programmes keep to the Disability Convention and support people with disabilities to live in the community. They should not pay for new buildings or services that keep them apart from other people.



If donors have training and understand the Disability Convention, they can make sure programmes include people with disabilities.



For example:

- say new buildings they pay for must be accessible



- say how many people with disabilities they will involve



- include people with all types of disabilities

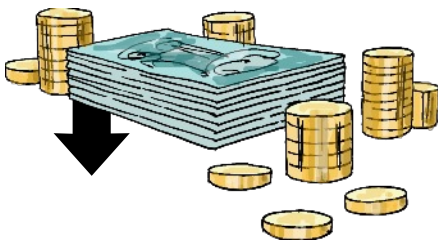


- show how they include people with disabilities in the same way as other groups who get left out.

## Deciding how much money to spend



There is not enough information about how much money is spent on programmes that support people with disabilities.

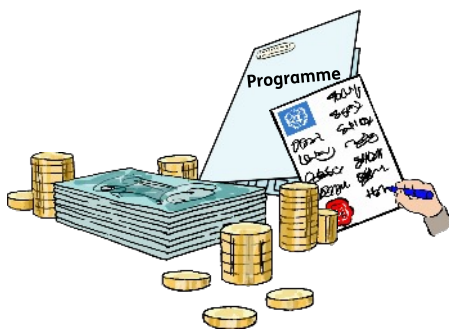


But the information for this report shows they receive much less money than other aid programmes. Probably less than £1 in every £100 that donors give.

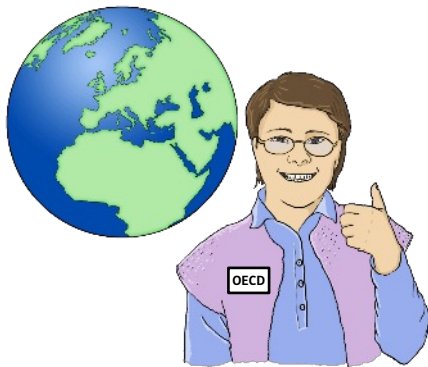




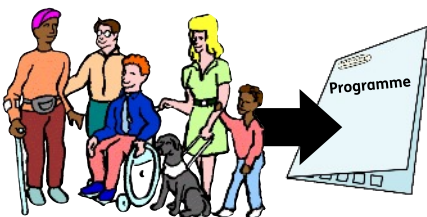
Some governments and organisations try to make sure the money goes to programmes that support people with disabilities.



But only a quarter of this money was for programmes that used the Disability Convention to include people with disabilities.



The OECD is an international organisation that works to give people better lives. In 2018 they set up a way to show which plans and programmes include people with disabilities and give them control over their lives.

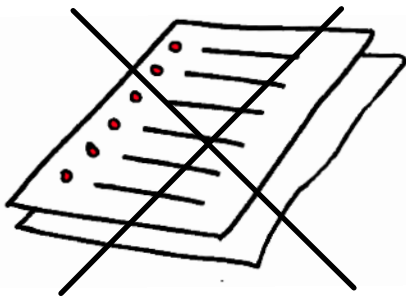


It shows how well programmes include people with disabilities and reminds donors not to leave them out of plans.

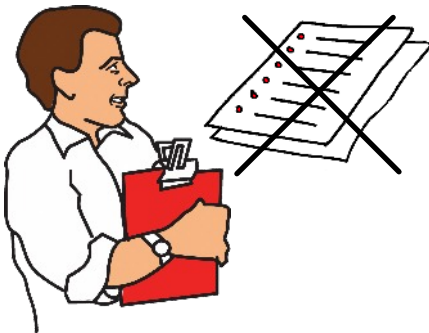
## Involving people with disabilities



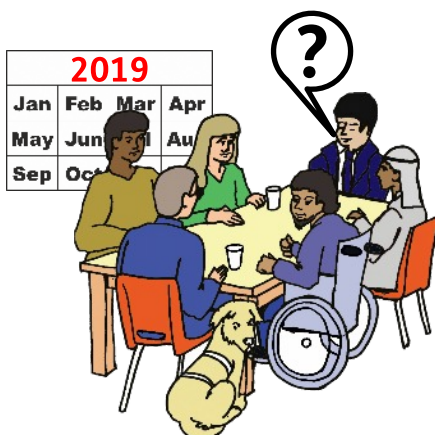
More donors now know it is important to involve organisations of people with disabilities in decisions about plans and programmes.



But there is not enough information about how they do this.



This makes it difficult to check whether they are involving people with disabilities properly and if this makes things better.



One organisation of people with disabilities asked people about this in 2019.



Half the people with disabilities or organisations they spoke to said donor organisations had asked what they thought.



But most of them:

- did not know much about the organisations giving the money



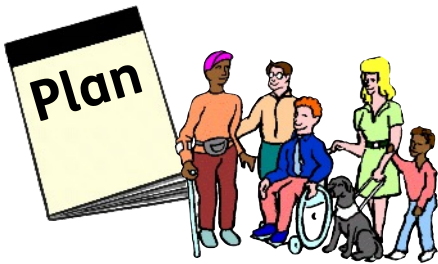
- were only asked questions about accessibility



- were people with physical disabilities or people who are deaf or blind.



Some donors work with international organisations of people with disabilities. Others work with organisations in their own country or the country they are giving money to.



All donors need plans to make sure they involve people with disabilities and their organisations properly.



Some countries are really good at involving organisations of people with disabilities to work together across the world.



Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland work with disabled peoples' organisations in their own countries to decide how to help people in countries with less money.



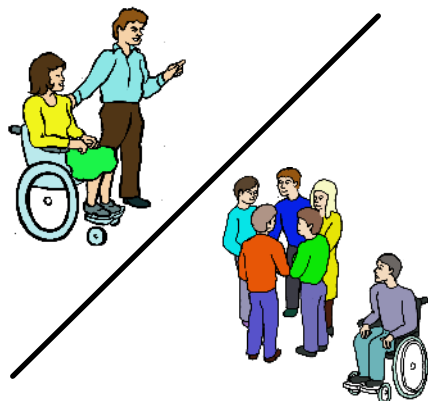
In Spain an organisation led by people with disabilities make sure programmes support people with disabilities in other countries.



Some private donors and organisations also involve people with disabilities in decisions about how aid is used.



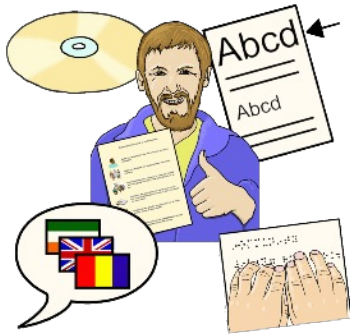
Money to support people with disabilities be involved should go straight to their organisations. This means they will decide how to use it to help people with disabilities.



## Showing whether programmes help people

Some donors can show whether their programmes support people with disabilities or discriminate against them.





This means:

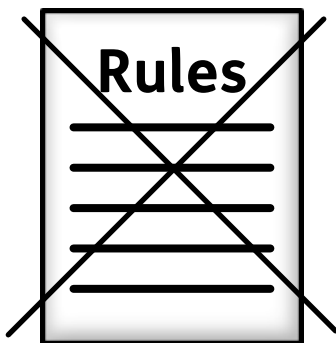
- giving people accessible information. Including information about how to complain



- asking people what they think in ways they can understand



- making sure everyone can use new buildings.



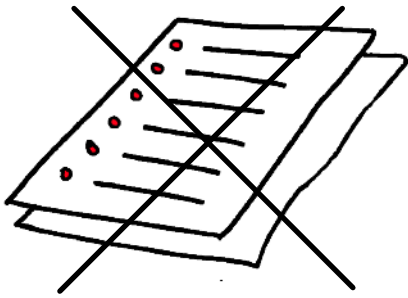
But even programmes funded by the same donor do not always follow the same rules.



Donors should involve people with disabilities in checking how they involve them. This will help donors learn how to do things better.



Donors should also check how well they involve people with different types of disability.



Some countries check how well all their programmes affect people with disabilities. But there is still not enough information about this.

## Research



**Research is a planned and organised way to find things out.** Most governments, or organisations of countries working together, do not include people with disabilities in planning research. Not even research about how to involve people with disabilities.

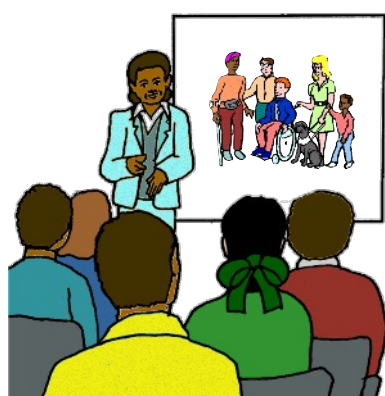


People with disabilities should be more involved in planning research into all areas of their lives. Not just health.





Better research will show what life is like for people with disabilities. It will help governments use the Disability Convention to involve people with disabilities in all their aid programmes.



## Having the right skills and knowledge

Most donors train their staff about involving people with disabilities and protecting their rights.



Some use the Disability Convention or train staff about human rights and discrimination.



Many also help other people they work with and organisations of people with disabilities get the skills they need.



Some donors visit their programmes and share what they learn.



Others use the internet, meetings, lunches and disability networks to share ideas and skills.

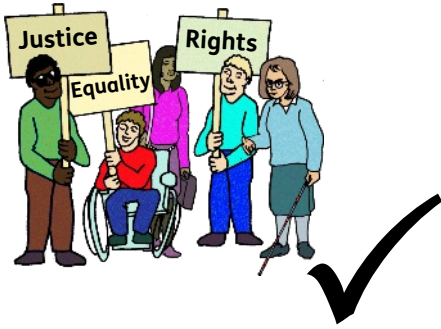


But half the donors the Special Rapporteur spoke to think many people involved in their programmes still do not understand the rights of people with disabilities.



Donors find it difficult to include people with disabilities in all stages of the programme. This includes working for them.

## Working better together



Organisations of different countries can work well together to make sure people with disabilities can get their rights. They can bring together different ideas, skills and ways of working.



Since the Disability Convention, a number of different organisations of different countries have been working to include people with disabilities in aid programmes.



The United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was set up to support countries to use the Disability Convention.



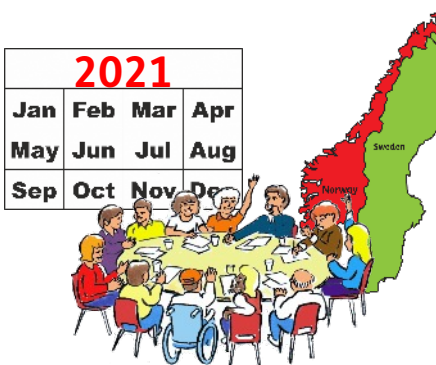
It pays for programmes that look at disability issues with local people and groups of people with disabilities. Although it pays for many different projects, it is still only a very small part of all the money donors give.



The Special Rapporteur thinks the Global Action on Disability Network is a good way for donors to share ideas. It helps them work together to make sure people with disabilities are included in their aid programmes.



Global Disability Summits are big meetings where countries work together to look at how to use the Disability Convention and involve people with disabilities.



The next big meeting will be in Norway in 2021.



## 6. How to change things?



Governments and other donors should do these things to include people with disabilities when they work together on aid programmes.



### **Include people with disabilities in all plans and programmes**

Donors should make sure all aid programmes include people with disabilities and make sure they get their rights. This includes programmes set up to help everyone. Especially plans for people affected by COVID-19.



But donors should also give money to support directly people with disabilities.





Governments should say how their plans will include people with disabilities and protect their rights. This will make it easier to check if they do the things they say they will.

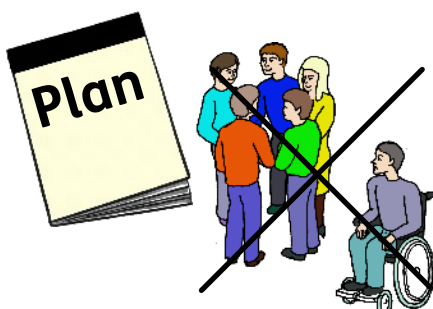


If people with disabilities are only included in general plans or in plans for vulnerable people, it is much harder to ensure things will get any better for them.

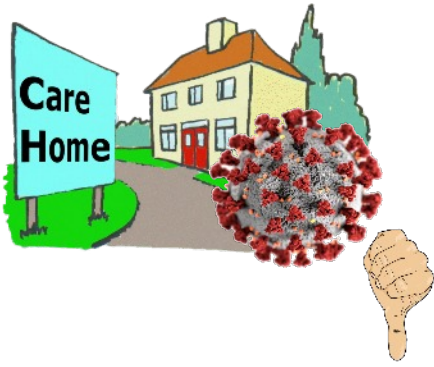
## Protect human rights



When countries work together, they should always think about human rights and the Disability Convention.



Their plans should never discriminate or keep people with disabilities apart from other people.



COVID-19 showed how dangerous it is for people to live in big hospitals and care homes away from other people. Governments must work to close these institutions and not plan new ones.



Donors should also understand that not everyone with a disability is the same.

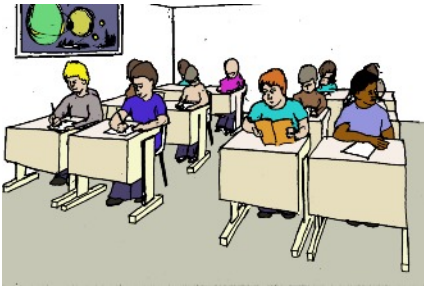


Like everyone else, people with disabilities are different ages, come from different ethnic groups, believe in different religions or have a different **sexual orientation**.

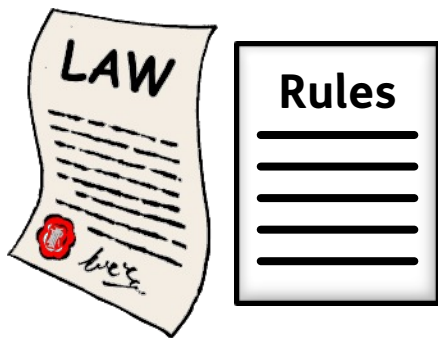


Donors should help groups who are often discriminated against and ignored because they are different.





For example, when children with disabilities go to school with other children, it helps other people understand and respect them.

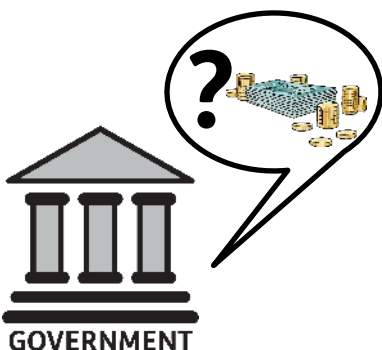


Sometimes governments set up **sanctions** against another country to punish them or try to make them keep to rules or laws. Sanctions should never stop donors supporting people with disabilities or take away their human rights.

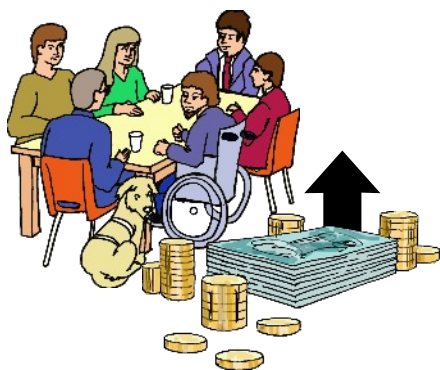
## Decide how much money to spend



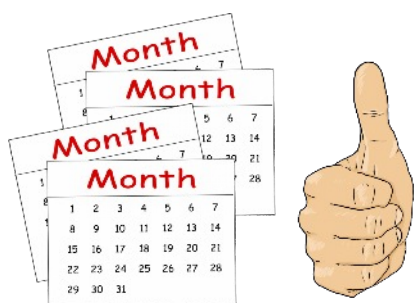
When governments sign the Disability Convention, they agree to give money and technical help to countries that cannot afford or do not have the skills to make sure people with disabilities get their human rights.



Governments should say how much money they will give for this and how they will share ideas and information so people with disabilities are not left out.



Programmes that involve and help people with disabilities can cost more. Donors should allow enough money to make this happens properly.



When richer countries give money to poorer countries it sometimes only makes things better for a short time. Countries need to look how to work together for a long time.



The Special Rapporteur said when different countries in the same part of the world work together it can really change things for people with disabilities.

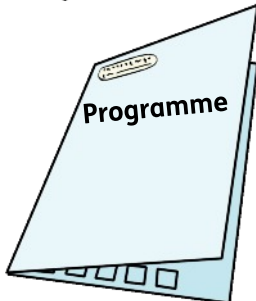
## Involve people with disabilities



All donors and organisations of countries working together should look at how good they are at including people with disabilities and their organisations and then include people when they:



- decide what needs to be done



- set up programmes



- need to understand how to build skills, solve problems and do research



- check how well programmes work.

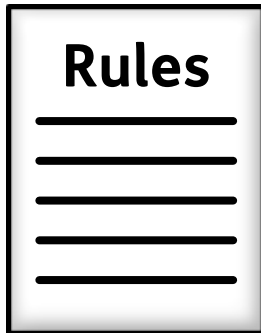


This means involving international organisations of disabled people and also people with disabilities in the countries they plan to help.



## Show how programmes help people

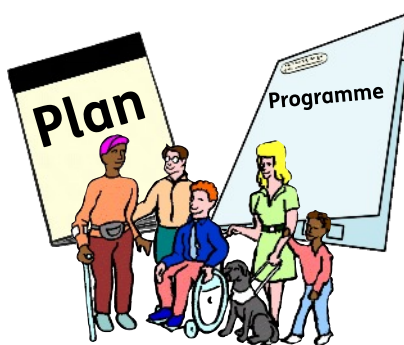
Governments and other donors must make sure their programmes support human rights and do not take away anyone's freedom.



They should have rules for their programmes and be able to show they have kept to these rules.



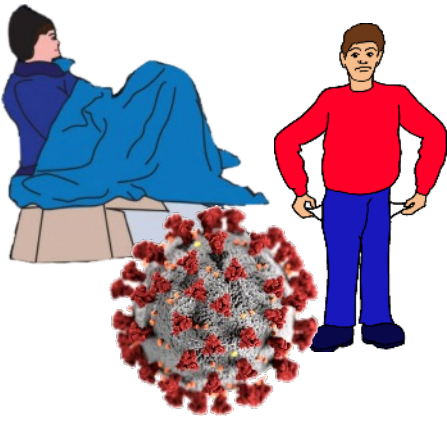
Donors should act quickly if things go wrong.



The OECD set up a way to show which plans and programmes include people with disabilities and give them control over their lives.



Countries that work together should use this to check how they involve people with disabilities. Even if they also have their own way to check this.



COVID-19 affected people's lives in different ways. Many people lost their homes or have less money because of the pandemic.



Countries must show how programmes to help people affected by COVID-19 give people with disabilities and their families the same help and support as other people.



Plans to get things back to normal must not take away people with disabilities' rights or freedoms.



We also need better information about how programmes help people with different types of disability.





This is not difficult to do and makes it easy to compare information from different programmes.



If donors ask for this information, it shows how important it is.

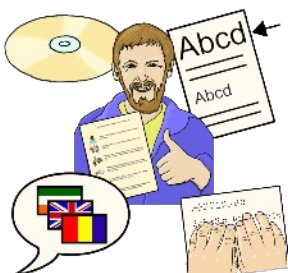


## Research

Research is a powerful way to find out what is happening for people with disabilities and what needs to change.



Governments and other donors should work together to find ways to include people with disabilities in planning and carrying out research.



This means research must be accessible and based on human rights.



Including people with disabilities as researchers will help everyone understand more about what life is like with a disability.



## Have the right skills and knowledge

Donor organisations should understand how to involve people with disabilities and protect their rights.



They should have:

- a lead person who knows about rights of people with disabilities



- training about rights of people with disabilities for all staff. Not just those working on programmes to help people with disabilities



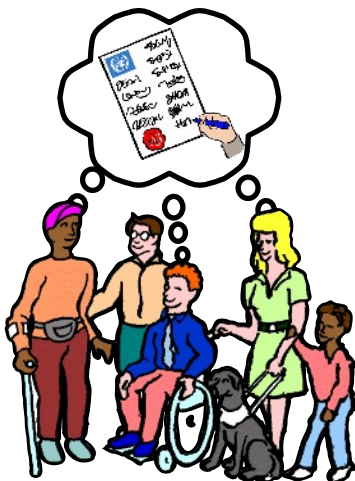
- support from other organisations. Including organisations of people with disabilities



- training to help them understand how employers can include and support people with disabilities.



Programmes that support organisations of people with disabilities should help people learn how to lead projects.



Things are getting better. But many people with disabilities think organisations should learn how to use the Disability Convention to involve them properly.



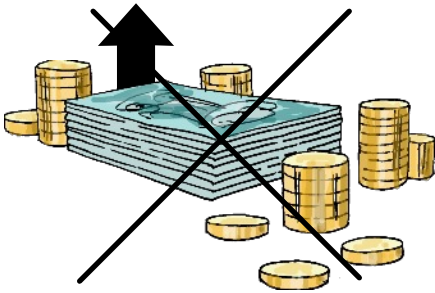
## 7. What happens next?



Countries can work together to speak up about human rights of people with disabilities by making sure they are involved in aid programmes.



The Disability Convention helps countries understand how important it is to involve people with disabilities when they work together.



But this has not led to more money for aid programmes that think about human rights for people with disabilities.



Without more aid to help them be involved, people with disabilities will be left out. Especially by programmes to help people affected by COVID-19.

The Special Rapporteur says countries can make sure aid programmes are accessible and include people with disabilities by doing these things:



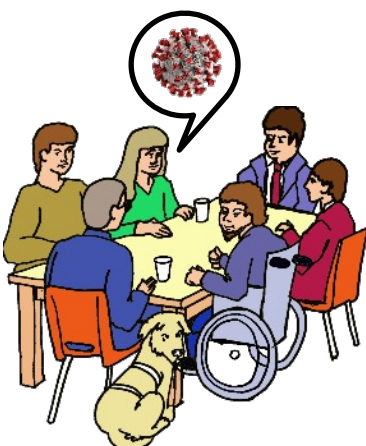
- include people with disabilities when they plan and carry out aid programmes and when they check how well programmes work



- have some programmes just to support people with disabilities



- make sure everything they do is based on human rights. Stop paying for projects that stop people with disabilities getting these rights



- include people with disabilities in planning and running all international projects to help people affected by COVID-19. As well as making sure they get help from them





- set up ways to involve people with disabilities and their organisations in decisions about aid programmes



- work together to support organisations of people with disabilities



- help aid organisations get the skills and knowledge to understand human rights and including people with disabilities



- collect good information about age, sex and types of disability to see how programmes affect different people with disabilities



- use the OECD way of showing whether plans and programmes include people with disabilities and give them control over their lives



- support research into ways to include people with disabilities and protect their human rights. This includes scientific and technical skills and sharing what they learn.



The Special Rapporteur says the United Nations must use its plan for including people with disabilities in all its work on aid programmes.



All donors must follow the Disability Convention and protect human rights by including people with disabilities whenever they work together on international programmes.



## 8. What the words mean

**Aid programme** - when donors give money to pay for things that will make life better for people over time.

**Accessible** – easy to use or be involved with.

**Climate change** – when the type of weather we have in different parts of the world changes and stays different for a long time, making life more difficult.

**COVID-19** – a disease caused by a **virus** that can make people very ill.

**Disability Convention** – a set of rules that have to follow to give people with disabilities the same human rights as everyone else.

**Discrimination** – treating someone worse than other people because of who they are or where they come from.

**Donor** – anyone who gives money to help poorer countries, this could be a government, organisation, person or any other group.

**Human Rights** – basic rights and freedoms that should happen for every person in the world.

**Pandemic** – when the same disease affects people in many different countries all over the world.

**Research** - a planned and organised way to answer questions and find things out.

**Rights** – things that should happen for every person.

**Sanctions** – when a government stops another country doing something to punish them or try to make them keep to rules or laws.

**Sexual orientation** – whether you are attracted to men, women, both or neither.

**Special Rapporteur** – a person working for the UN who helps countries understand what they need to do to make sure people get their rights.

**United Nations** – a group of 193 different countries that work together to try to make the world a better and safer place for everyone.

**Virus** - a tiny germ that gets into your body and can make you ill.







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