



**International
Disability
Alliance**

African Disability Forum, Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities, ASEAN Disability Forum, Down Syndrome International, European Disability Forum, Inclusion International, International Federation of Hard of Hearing People, International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families, Pacific Disability Forum, World Blind Union, World Federation of the Deaf, World Federation of the Deaf Blind, World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY ALLIANCE'S STATEMENT TO THE FIRST GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM 2019

Thank you Chair.

The International Disability Alliance urges all participants to the Forum to commit to the full inclusion and active involvement of refugees with disabilities in all stages of the refugee response.

Persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected in large-scale and protracted displacement situations. They are at heightened risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, and face multiple and intersectional discrimination, and in particular under-represented groups such as persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities. Refugee women and girls, children, older persons, and indigenous people with disability face compounding barriers to access protection and assistance.

The lack of disaggregated data makes refugees with disabilities "invisible" at reception and in assessment procedures, excluding them from basic services, education and opportunities for self-reliance. Stigma and lack of awareness further isolate them, and the lack of accessible information, infrastructure and services perpetrates this exclusion.

Durable and equitable solutions must be inclusive of all refugees, wherever and whoever they are: this is the only way to reach the goal of the 2030 Agenda. Such solutions require support to the meaningful participation, and active involvement of refugees with disabilities. Recognizing the leadership role of refugees with disabilities in decision-making, and their capacity as actors in the refugee response, is key to accountability, and to ensure that all related processes are inclusive, accessible, and transparent.

Therefore, IDA calls for all actions to be in line with the principles of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular the provision of article 11, to promote the participation of refugees with disabilities, including the most marginalized groups and from the Global South. IDA also calls to all actors of the refugee response to implement the IASC Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action in refugee contexts, to make sure that responses to movements of refugees do not perpetuate exclusion and segregation. Finally, the implementation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy is key to promote participation of persons with disabilities.

This would lead to the much needed attitudinal and transformative change recognizing that disability inclusion is not just a mere add-on but is central to achieve the promise of leaving no one behind.

Thank you very much.
