



L'Arche International | COSP 17 Civil Society Forum and General Debate | June 2024

L'Arche International is a global Federation of more than 160 communities that span 37 countries including in Ukraine, Haiti, Palestine, and Syria. We are committed to building a world centered on dignity, rights, opportunities, and community. In contribution to the 17TH Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities we submit this statement under Sub-theme 2: Persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies.

We call for the leadership of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities at all stages of humanitarian work. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities must be included when identifying risks and making decisions about resources and programs in all humanitarian work. The full participation and leadership of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities will make humanitarian actions more inclusive, accessible, and effective for everyone.

Full Participation in Decision-Making

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities must have access to the appropriate supports and resources needed to participate in humanitarian work. Research shows that those most affected are most often not asked to share their experiences or opinions in disaster planning and management.ⁱ

Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities must be part of identifying barriers and in deciding how to use resources for disaster risk reduction and emergency assistance. Failure to consider people with intellectual and developmental disabilities will lead to higher risks and lack of access to appropriately developed and available humanitarian services.ⁱⁱ

Social Stigma Must End

Social stigma against people with intellectual and developmental disabilities blocks inclusion and access. Stigma is often supported by structures and systems. To effectively address risks and emergencies, we must work together to change the structures and systems that support stigma.ⁱⁱⁱ

Institutionalization is Not Protection

Institutionalizing people with intellectual and developmental disabilities takes away their rights. It must not be used as a protection measure in situations of risk or emergency. A human rights approach that provides access to community-based assistance available to others is essential.^{iv}

Commitment to Human Rights

L'Arche International supports a human rights approach to dealing with risks and humanitarian emergencies that are aligned with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and operational independence.^v Together, we are committed to building a world where each person is valued and belongs.

ⁱ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2014). *UNISDR 2013 Survey on Living with Disabilities and Disasters – Key Findings*. https://www.unisdr.org/2014/iddr/documents/2013DisabilitySurveyReport_030714.pdf

ⁱⁱ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2023). *2023 Global Survey Report on Persons with Disabilities and Disasters*. <https://www.undrr.org/partners-and-stakeholders/disability-inclusion-disaster-risk-reduction#:~:text=The%20failure%20to%20include%20persons,in%20relief%20and%20response%20efforts>

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2017). *General comment No.5: Article 19 (The right to live independently and be included in the community)*. CRPD/C/GC/5. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-comment-no5-article-19-right-live>

^{iv} United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2022). *Guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies*. CRPD/C/5. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/legal-standards-and-guidelines/crpd5-guidelines-deinstitutionalization-including>

^v United Nations. (1991). *General Assembly Resolution 46/182 (Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations)*. A/RES/46/182. <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FRES%2F46%2F182&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False> ;

United Nations. (2004). *General Assembly Resolution 58/114 (Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations)*. A/RES/58/114. <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FRES%2F58%2F114&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>