

Contribution to the Draft General Comment No. 9 on article 11 UNCRPD: The obligation of States parties in situations of risk, including armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters

Organisation: Austrian Disability Council

The Austrian Disability Council is the legally established umbrella organisation of more than 85 member organisations, representing around 1.4 million persons with disabilities in Austria.

General Remarks

The Committee may consider adding that *inclusive evacuation for any type of crisis* (including climate-related crises like heatwaves, floods, etc.) *needs to be regularly trained and tested* in order to be effective. Persons with various disabilities should be meaningfully involved in those trainings to share their expertise and lived experience. State parties should be required to conduct *regular, inclusive evacuation drills* at least once a year. In this regard, all persons in positions of responsibility should receive training on the rights of persons with disabilities, inclusive communication and the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities.

The Committee may also include the need for *regularly updated inclusive state disaster response plans at the national level*, developed with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

Furthermore, the State parties must ensure effective coordination and cooperation among *all relevant government agencies well in advance of a crisis, in order to guarantee preparedness and an effective, inclusive response when a crisis occurs.*

In addition, the care of people who use ventilators and oxygen supply must be ensured, as this is a matter of life and death even more urgently.

Comment to VI Complementarity, para 16, 17, 18

The Austrian Disability Council appreciates the emphasis on the *increased risk of children and women with disabilities* experiencing physical, psychological and sexual violence in crisis situations. In addition, the Committee may consider *collecting sex-, age-, and disability disaggregated data and as well as the development of corresponding indicators*. Such data would serve, on the one hand, to monitor the inclusion of persons with disabilities in preparedness and response measures during anticipated or actual crisis and, on the other hand, to raise awareness of the specific protection needs of women, girls and children with disabilities.

Comment to VII. Obligations of State parties, para 52

The Committee may consider expanding the approach concerning the collection of *data*. While the Austrian Disability Council appreciates the emphasizes to collect data on persons with disabilities living in institutions and on those transitioning through deinstitutionalization processes, it is also important to collect data on persons with disabilities living alone or with their families.

In addition, establishing a *crisis situation register for persons with disabilities*, could be considered as an option to ensure that emergency responders are aware of specific support needs in the event of a crisis. However, any collection and processing of such data must be handled with the utmost care, ensuring strong safeguards to prevent misuse and protect the privacy of persons with disabilities. Regarding data collection, state parties should be required to *install concrete indicators to monitor* the implementation of disability inclusion in crisis situations.

Comment to VII. Obligations of State parties, para 55

In this regard the Committee may consider that persons with disabilities should also *be part of the crisis management teams*, in order to directly develop, implement and monitor Disaster Risk Reduction.

Comment to VIII. Obligations of non-State actors, para 67

Non-state actors (that provide emergency evacuations and warnings, as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief) as well as state actors *should support persons with disabilities in organizing self-sufficiency* well in advance of a crisis or natural disaster, since in a crisis it may take some time for emergency responders to reach persons with disabilities.

On behalf of our president Klaus Widl

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