

## ZERO PROJECT CONFERENCE 2016:

### INNOVATIVE POLICIES AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICES ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND ICT

Video Message by Ms. Daniela Bas, Director, DESA DSPD

Session Title:

**SDGS and DISABILITY INDICATORS.**

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Let me start by thanking you for inviting me to participate in this conference. I regret not being able to join you in person.

I will speak about the SDGs and Disability indicators.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an encouraging milestone for disability. Contrary to the MDGs, this new Agenda highlights the importance of leaving no one behind and includes seven targets explicitly referring to persons with disabilities. These targets focus on education, employment, empowerment and participation. They also focus on capacity-building and availability of data disaggregated by disability.

Disaggregated data is very important. As statisticians are fond of saying, in order to count, you must first be counted. Even though data on disability has been increasingly available in recent years, the quality and quantity is still insufficient. The good news is that methodologies and relevant UN principles and guidance for collecting disaggregated data have already been developed. Much more progress can be achieved by building on those methodologies and principles and applying them at the national level.

For example many countries still do not even know how many of their citizens are persons with disabilities. Or how many of their children with disabilities do not attend school. Or how many of their citizens with disabilities lack access to ICTs.

These statistics are critical for empowerment and accessibility; and for monitoring implementation of the SDGs. Member States should work with organisations representing persons with disabilities to develop appropriate national monitoring frameworks and national development plans. Capacity building at the country level will be needed to produce the necessary data and to train policy makers on how to use data in policy making.

Another critical factor for implementation is strong political will at the national level, backed by evidence-based policy making. It is important for Governments to translate the strong commitments made at the international level, into concrete policies at the national level. Adopting and enforcing robust policies that are disability sensitive and responsive; improving accessibility and ensuring equal opportunities; and raising public awareness on persons with disabilities as actors and contributors to development, not passive recipients of charity, are all critical.

One of the most comprehensive SDG targets, as far as disability is concerned, is target 10.2 which calls for social, economic and political empowerment and inclusion of persons with

disabilities. Both education and access to ICT for persons with disabilities will be essential to achieve inclusion and empowerment.

The SDG education targets focus on ensuring equal access to education for persons with disabilities as well as education facilities which are sensitive for students with disabilities.

In addition, the SDG target on accessible transport is also relevant for students with disabilities. It is known that many children and youth with disabilities cannot attend school due to lack of accessible transport.

The SDG target 9.c also calling for significantly increase access to ICT also applies to persons with disabilities.

Communication is key to raising public awareness, of the SDGs in general and of disability specific SDGs. In this regard, organisations such as The Zero Project are essential. Your mission statement of *working for a world with zero barriers* is shared by us at the United Nations. Many other civil society organisations and national governments also share this vision. It is important for all of us to work in partnership to build a global coalition with strong messages that can engage people the world over in implementing a truly inclusive global agenda.

I wish you all a very successful conference and hope I can join you in person next time.

Thank you.