



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[6 February 2023]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Situation Of Persons With Disabilities**

There are 1 billion persons with disabilities who constitute 15% of the total population of the world. 80% live in developing countries and 80% experience chronic poverty. The exclusion of this section is 4 times higher than any other excluded sections of the society. They exhibit lowest social, economic, health, educational, cultural and political outcomes. The situation becomes more vulnerable if multiple identities adds to it such as gender, poverty, ethnicity, minority status, ETC. Women and girls with disabilities often subjected to gender based abuse, violence and exploitation. They face sexual, mental, physical and psychological abuse. Domestic violence further marginalises them. They have increased vulnerability to discrimination and abuse. They are deprived from opportunities. Their participation in the economic activities is negligible. Even though they contribute to the economy but that is not taken in to account by the men. They do not have access and control over productive wealth, assets and property.<sup>1</sup> United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities mandates the states parties to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons with disabilities. Many national governments have enacted legislations to harmonise their domestic legal framework in line with the convention. These legislations have not been implemented on the ground in letter and spirit so that all persons with disabilities can enjoy their all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others. There is a great need to take the note of the issues and challenges of persons with disabilities. It is important for the national governments to take affirmative and proactive action to facilitate the access of persons with disabilities to health care, education, employment, sports, arts and culture, recreation and leisure. There is an urgent need to promote international cooperation as per the article 32 of the convention to enable the least developed and developing countries to implement the provisions enshrined in the convention. Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled has been significantly contributing to promote the access of persons with disabilities to health care, comprehensive rehabilitation services, education, employment, sports, arts and culture, recreation and leisure, assistive technology, rescue, relief, rehabilitation and long-term reconstruction during disaster particularly during last pandemic. These services have reached over 300000 persons who are underserved and underprivileged.

The livelihood resource centres have provided livelihood training and skill development of over 23000 persons with and without disabilities. 69% of them have been placed across sectors and who have started earning. Over 60 job fairs have been conducted which provided them the opportunity to interact with the employer and get hired on the spot if they are qualified for suitable positions. This has significantly enhanced their income and family income also. The educational interventions have reached over 15000 children and youth with and without disabilities which enabled them to access better employment opportunities in the labour market. The women empowerment programmes have empowered over 2500 women in distress. The environmental protection programmes have collected, managed and recycled millions tonnes of dry waste which has significantly contributed to prevent pollution and action against climate change. The arts and cultural initiatives have improved the artistic abilities and talents of over 500 artists with disabilities and performed over 5000 shows both on national and international platforms. Over 10000 persons with disabilities have accessed comprehensive rehabilitation services including assistive devices, technology, therapeutic, surgical interventions including essential medication. These have improved the functional abilities of persons with disabilities and improved access to education, livelihoods and other aspects of life. Nutritional support has been provided over 7000 government school going children every day by serving cooked hot midday meal. This has significantly increased the rate of enrolment, retention, promotion, concentration and grasping abilities of children. Over 2500 children with intellectual disabilities have accessed special education and improved their functional literacy and functional abilities. Over 700 children with disabilities have been accessing inclusive education in regular government schools. All the appropriate support is provided to them and the teachers. This has enabled the rural children to access education at their door step and improve the literacy rate. Sporting activities have been trained over 100 youth with disabilities in different sporting activities and attended the sports events both within the country and abroad also. Cricket for the blind is one of the core activities of the organisation. Over 30000 blind cricketers both men and women have been associated with

the organisation and benefited in different ways. 30 state cricket for the blind associations have affiliated to the Cricket Association for the Blind in India, an independent and autonomous organisation which manages cricket for the blind in India. The Indian blind cricket team has won T20 world cup for three times consecutively. This recognition to the players and dismantled the myths and misconceptions among the general public and community towards persons who are blind and partially sighted. These multiple strategic interventions have significantly contributed in achieving sustainable development goals and implement the provisions enshrined in the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. As a result of which persons with disabilities are able enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others effectively. These strategic interventions have significantly contributed in enhancing the self-esteem, worth, respect, dignity, participation, decision making, confidence, motivation, income, recognition, acceptance, positive attitude of the community, social inclusion and socialisation process. They have enhanced participation in the social and community development. Their contribution has enhanced to the community development and society.

In conclusion it can be stated that the general debate should consider the issues and challenges seriously and take the note of deprivation which they face across the world particularly in developing and least developed countries. We call upon all the countries to take note of the issues of persons with disabilities and make a conscious attempt to resolve them on a priority basis.

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<sup>1</sup> World report on disability by WHO and World Bank 2011.