



# 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 Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan, 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.

[31 January 2023]

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



## **Empowering People Living With Disabilities**

According to the World Health Organization, globally around 1.3 billion people experience some form of disability. A large number of these people are from developing countries, where access to state support, health services and welfare is a challenge. It has also been pointed out that Persons with disabilities have twice the risk of developing conditions such as depression, asthma, diabetes, stroke, obesity or poor oral health. Inaccessible health facilities are up to 6 times more difficult and they also find transportation 15 times more difficult than for those without disabilities. Further, health inequities arise from unfair conditions faced by persons with disabilities, including stigma, discrimination, poverty, exclusion from education and employment, and barriers faced in the health system itself. Over 26.8 million differently abled persons live in India, making up more than 2.2 % of the population. Over 18 million of these persons live in rural area, which means that government authorities find it difficult to deliver welfare programs to them. Lack of access to facilities such as schools for especially abled, trained medical/support personnel etc. is compounded by inadequate understanding of the needs of differently abled persons and often leads to discrimination and lower health and education outcomes. There is an urgent need for adequate data and identification, in order to deliver government programs to this segment.

Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS) has been successfully working with more than 450 people with disabilities and children with disabilities in 20 rural remote villages of Ajmer District. RSKS works with 21 types of disabilities which were under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill - 2016 Passed by Parliament. These 21 types of disabilities are Blindness, Low-vision, Leprosy Cured persons, Hearing Impairment, Locomotor Disability, Dwarfism, Intellectual Disability, Mental Illness, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, Chronic Neurological conditions, Specific Learning Disabilities, Multiple Sclerosis, Speech and Language disability, Thalassemia, Hemophilia, Sickle Cell disease, Multiple Disabilities including deaf blindness, Acid Attack victim, Parkinson's disease. RSKS has been working on health, empowerment, livelihood, education and social inclusion of these types of people with disabilities and children with disabilities. Government of India has many disabled welfare programs but due to lack of awareness at the rural remote areas, the disabled people living in those rural areas are not aware about these beneficial schemes of the government. RSKS India comes in handy at this place as the team members of RSKS India approaches the families of the disabled people and aware the disabled as well as their family members about the government schemes which are beneficial for the disabled people.

India has taken significant steps towards addressing this issue and the exclusion faced by Differently abled persons. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) was set up in 2012 to facilitate empowerment and inclusion of the persons with disabilities and acts as a nodal agency to look after all development agenda of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan). India is also a signatory to the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disability and passed the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 to recognize the rights of Divyangjan and put in place mechanisms to address issues related to their inclusion and empowerment. The Act has also established Central and state authorities for enforcement of rules notified under it. It has improved the accessibility conditions for the disabled people at the government and non-government departments. Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan to spread mass awareness about the Act and other schemes has formed different types of groups which act together to build better conditions for the differently abled. One of these groups are the Disabled People Organization (DPO) which are formed by RSKS team members in each of the 20 rural remote villages. In this group, families of the disabled people/children, disabled, RSKS team member and public representatives are the members and then everyone collectively work for the betterment of the disabled people at the ground level. Along with this, Child support groups and teacher support groups are also formed in the schools which are working to provide a friendly environment to the disabled child studying at the school. Along with this, RSKS also teaches the disabled people that they could get livelihood benefit from the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act as through it they could get the type of job that they could do and get paid for it.

India also launched the Accessible India campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) on December 3, 2015 to ensure universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities. It has three important verticals- the Build Environment, the transportation sector and the ICT ecosystem. At the same time, in a country the scale of India, there are additional challenges to welfare service delivery, equitable access and identification, which need to be addressed through a coordination of both government and non-government organizations like us. RSKS also seeks for the support from any other organization too as due to lack of resources, we are also not able to cater to the needs of the disabled people however our team links the differently abled people to any other organization who is providing assistance or any equipment for the disabled people.

Disability is referenced in various parts of the SDGs and specifically in parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, as well as data collection and monitoring of the SDGs, RSKS has been working on those goals which includes the betterment of the differently abled people. The SDG goals which RSKS is pursuing through its programs are as follows: Goal 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all focuses on eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities. RSKS always welcomes children with disabilities in its Schools and vocational centers and also works to provide a better and safer environment for the school going disabled children through creating teacher action groups and child action groups at the school. RSKS team also does home-based activities with the children with disabilities and teaches them about shapes, sizes, colour, numbers and also about the daily hygiene tasks. In Goal 8: to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, the international community aims to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. RSKS at every stage never thinks that the task is for male oriented or female oriented because all the tasks are human oriented and at different levels at RSKS we welcome people with disabilities to be part of our organization and also the President & Vice president from the disabled people organizations are also chosen from the people with disability so that a leadership and it would increase the capacity and bring positive changes.

Closely linked is Goal 10, which strives to reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, including persons with disabilities. Under this goal, RSKS India is doing social inclusion of the differently abled people by convincing them and doing 3 stages counseling with them to motivate them to participate at the festivals, occasions and at the village decision making so that their confidence could be built. Along with this, RSKS also provides direct livelihood support to the people with disabilities so that they could also have an opportunity to live a successful life. Goal 11 would work to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable. RSKS team spreads awareness to the people with disabilities so that they could know their rights and understand in better way about the mobility facilities provided to them by the Indian government like train pass, bus pass and special seats for them in those. RSKS team supports the disabled people and their families in the process of their pass making.

Small efforts of Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan at the rural remote villages of Ajmer District in Rajasthan has provided big smile on the face of the people who are differently abled, these small efforts continuously done by all the civil societies, governments, non-profit organizations, businesses etc. could lead to a better world for the 1.3 billion people specially challenged people where they could experience lots of joy and happiness like other people and by 2030 be part of every business, government and other organizations at different hierarchy level through a law enforced by every countries government.

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i <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>

ii Census of India 2011

iii <https://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/content/page/accessible-india-campaign.php>