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**Matters related to the implementation of the Convention:
round-table discussions**

Participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters

Note by Secretariat

The present note was prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with United Nations entities, representatives of civil society and other relevant stakeholders to facilitate the round-table discussion on the theme “Participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters”. The Secretariat hereby transmits the note, as approved by the Bureau of the Conference, to the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at its fifteenth session.

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I. Introduction

1. Persons with disabilities are particularly vulnerable during natural disasters and extreme climate events. Barriers to their full participation in society prior to disasters, including their exclusion from participation in disaster risk reduction, climate change and natural disaster response planning, the stigmatization and discrimination they face and the inaccessibility of the physical environment tend to be exacerbated by natural disasters. Failure to develop and adopt more accessible and inclusive climate adaptation and mitigation policies and emergency preparedness, response and recovery practices in consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations results in such barriers being further compounded when emergencies occur. The exacerbated risks faced by persons with disabilities are widely acknowledged but not adequately addressed. Moreover, disasters contribute to disabilities, including psychosocial disabilities, a factor that needs to be considered in planning for disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction, climate change and natural disaster responses.

2. Persons with disabilities and their representative organizations have an important role to play in addressing the global crisis of climate change. All States have an obligation to ensure that their climate actions respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all, including by integrating the rights of persons with disabilities into climate laws, policies and programmes. The adverse effects of climate change on the effective enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities require urgent, rights-based, disability-inclusive climate action.

II. Relevant international normative frameworks

3. Under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it is recognized that the rights of persons with disabilities are particularly adversely affected during emergency situations. The Convention provides a framework for the participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations so as to guide preparedness, response and recovery efforts during climate events and other natural disasters. Pursuant to article 11 of the Convention, in particular, the obligations of States to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including climate events and natural disasters, are stipulated and reinforced.

4. Several other articles of the Convention include provisions relevant to the protection of persons with disabilities in emergency situations. These include ensuring close consultation with and the active involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities in the development and implementation of legislation and policies (art. 4 (3)); raising awareness among stakeholders of disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction (art. 8); access to justice (art. 13); the protection of persons with disabilities from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16); the right to live independently and be included in the community, including in shelters during emergency situations (art. 19); freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21); habilitation and rehabilitation services (art. 26); the right to an adequate standard of living and social protection, including the right to food, water and shelter, in particular during post-disaster recovery and reconstruction (art. 28); the collection of appropriate statistics and data to understand the situation of persons with disabilities before, during and after disasters (art. 31); and designating national monitoring and implementation mechanisms, including focal points within government, coordination mechanisms and national human rights institutions, in order to involve all relevant actors in preparation, response and recovery efforts (art. 33).

5. The cross-cutting nature of disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction is mainstreamed in the Sustainable Development Goals, notably in the context of ending poverty by building the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations to climate-related extreme events (target 1.5); making human settlements sustainable and inclusive by ensuring the protection of people in vulnerable situations from disasters (target 11.5); and combating climate change by enhancing capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, with a focus on marginalized communities (target 13.b).

6. In another disability-focused agreement, the “Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: the way forward, a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond”, adopted in 2013 by the Assembly by its resolution 68/3, Member States are specifically urged to take actions to “continue to strengthen the inclusion of and focus on the needs of persons with disabilities in humanitarian programming and response, and include accessibility and rehabilitation as essential components in all aspects and stages of humanitarian response, inter alia, by strengthening preparedness and disaster risk reduction”.

7. The inclusion of persons with disabilities has also been emphasized in the context of combating climate change and in disaster risk reduction. Pursuant to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, it is noted that parties to the Agreement should respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, including the rights of persons with disabilities, when taking actions to address climate change. Organizations of persons with disabilities acquired official observer status and participated in the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in 2021, producing a position paper on disability-inclusive climate action.¹ The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 provides for a rights-based sustainable development agenda based on accessibility and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction policies and in all stages of disaster risk reduction planning. Similarly, the importance of strengthening contingency planning and provision for disaster preparedness and response, emergency relief and population evacuation for persons with disabilities is emphasized in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, in which the importance of engaging a broad range of stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, in the context of climate change is also acknowledged.

8. Increasing the resilience of persons with disabilities affected by disasters has also been a key topic of the Commission for Social Development. In particular, at its fifty-seventh session, in 2019, the Commission organized a panel discussion on the theme “Emerging issues: the empowerment of people affected by natural and human-made disasters to reduce inequality: addressing the differential impact on persons with disabilities, older persons and youth”. During the panel discussion, participants highlighted the need to address the needs of persons with disabilities, with a view to promoting their inclusion, equality and empowerment, and examined the role of social policy to maximize opportunities for persons with disabilities, with a view to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for all.

9. The New Urban Agenda was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and endorsed by the General Assembly in 2016 in its resolution 71/256. Under the Agenda, it is envisaged that cities and human settlements “adopt and implement disaster risk reduction and

¹ Available at www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/paper-inclusion-persons-disabilities-climate-action.

management, reduce vulnerability, build resilience and responsiveness to natural and human-made hazards and foster mitigation of and adaptation to climate change”. The need to give particular attention to addressing multiple forms of discrimination faced by, inter alia, women and girls, children and youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples and local communities, slum and informal-settlement dwellers, homeless people, workers, smallholder farmers and fishers, refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and migrants, regardless of their migration status is also recognized. The Agenda also outlines the need for environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development, including through “the sustainable management of natural resources in cities and human settlements in a manner that protects and improves the urban ecosystem and environmental services, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution and promotes disaster risk reduction and management, by supporting the development of disaster risk reduction strategies and periodical assessments of disaster risk caused by natural and human-made hazards, including standards for risk levels, while fostering sustainable economic development and protecting the well-being and quality of life of all persons through environmentally sound urban and territorial planning, infrastructure and basic services”. In addition, the Agenda provides for the integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation considerations and measures into age- and gender-responsive urban and territorial development and planning processes, including greenhouse gas emissions, resilience-based and climate effective design of spaces, buildings and construction, services and infrastructure, and nature-based solutions. Member States are encouraged to promote cooperation and coordination across sectors and build the capacities of local authorities to develop and implement disaster risk reduction and response plans, such as risk assessments concerning the location of current and future public facilities, and to formulate adequate contingency and evacuation procedures.

10. Similarly, under the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, which was developed for the World Humanitarian Summit held in 2016 and has been endorsed by many States and stakeholders, signatories have committed to “strive to ensure that services and humanitarian assistance are equally available for and accessible to all persons with disabilities, and guarantee the availability, affordability and access to specialized services, including assistive technology, in the short, medium and long term”. The document includes specific reference to the occurrence of natural disasters.

III. Key issues and challenges

11. Persons with disabilities are at greater risk of the adverse impacts of climate change owing to a variety of social and economic factors. Poverty, discrimination and stigmatization are key issues that have an impact on the exposure of persons with disabilities to the impacts of climate change. In the light of intersecting factors related to gender, age, ethnicity, geography, migration, religion and sex, some persons with disabilities may face a higher risk of experiencing the adverse effects of climate change, including with regard to their health, food security, housing, water and sanitation, livelihood and mobility. Taking into account the requirements of persons with disabilities is critical to ensuring effective climate action and preventing climate change from exacerbating inequalities. A disability-inclusive approach will empower persons with disabilities as agents of change, prevent discrimination against them and make climate action more effective.²

² See the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the analytical study on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of climate change ([A/HRC/44/30](#), paras. 58 and 59).

12. Many national plans on climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disaster are not sensitive to the needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities. Among those States that have submitted a national report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and have provided information on their implementation of article 11, 22 per cent have only generic emergency planning and have no specific emergency plans in place for persons with disabilities.³ In addition, many persons with disabilities remain unprepared for the eventuality of a disaster. According to a global survey⁴ conducted in 137 countries in 2013, 72 per cent of those persons with disabilities surveyed said that they had no personal preparedness plan in place for disasters; only 31 per cent always had someone to help them to evacuate, while 13 per cent had no one to assist them. Moreover, just 21 per cent of persons with disabilities said that they could evacuate immediately without difficulty in the event of a sudden disaster, while 73 per cent said that they would face a certain amount of difficulty and 6 per cent said that they would not be able to evacuate at all. If given sufficient time, the percentage of those who could evacuate without difficulty increased from 21 per cent to 38 per cent. However, 58 per cent responded that they would still have difficulty, while 4 per cent said that they would still be unable to evacuate at all. Furthermore, only 17 per cent of respondents were aware of a disaster management plan in their community. The same survey also indicated that persons with disabilities remained alienated from emergency and disaster response planning. As few as 14 per cent of persons with disabilities said that they had been consulted on disaster management plans in their community, although half of the respondents expressed a wish to participate in community disaster management.

13. A 2021 review of disability inclusion in the disaster risk reduction, civil protection and climate change policies of the countries of Europe and Central Asia identified no examples of systematic data disaggregation and only one example of the allocation of State budget to disability-inclusive civil protection. It also found practically no reference to disability in national climate change adaptation policies.⁵

14. When disasters hit, persons with disabilities face higher risks and are disproportionately affected compared with persons without disabilities. Persons with disabilities are at higher risk of poverty and, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the poorest people will continue to experience the worst effects of climate change through lost income and livelihood opportunities, displacement, hunger and adverse impacts on their health.⁶

15. Climate change may lead to a higher risk of forced displacement owing to the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as cyclones and drought, as well as environmental degradation that affects livelihoods and survival. Persons with disabilities face heightened protection risks and barriers to inclusion and are likely to have specific additional needs when it comes to forced displacement in

³ *Disability and Development Report: Realizing the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities* (United Nations publication, 2018).

⁴ United Nations, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR, previously UNISDR), “Living with disability and disasters: UNISDR 2013 survey on living with disabilities and disasters – key findings”, 2014.

⁵ European Disability Forum, “Review of disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction policy and practice across Europe and Central Asia”, Belgium, November 2021. Available at www.edf-feph.org/publications/review-of-disability-inclusive-disaster-risk-reduction-policy-and-practice-across-europe-and-central-asia/.

⁶ Valérie Masson-Delmotte and others, eds., *Global Warming of 1.5°C: An IPCC Special Report on the Impacts of Global Warming of 1.5°C above Pre-Industrial Levels and Related Global Greenhouse Gas Emission Pathways, in the Context of Strengthening the Global Response to the Threat of Climate Change, Sustainable Development, and Efforts to Eradicate Poverty* (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2018) p. 479.

the context of disasters and climate change. Multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination may further compound the risk that persons with disabilities will experience the negative effects of climate change, owing to barriers faced in the form of discrimination on the basis of age, race or gender, for example.⁷

16. Persons with disabilities may not be able to escape the situation and may be left behind to fend for themselves. They may experience more obstacles when evacuating owing to a lack of accessible transportation or accessible shelters, or may not receive warnings in a format that is accessible to them. Persons with psychosocial disabilities or intellectual impairments may be particularly adversely affected in that regard. Death rates among persons with disabilities tend to be higher than among the rest of the population. Evacuation rates tend to be lower among households that have a family member with disabilities, compared with households that do not.

17. Moreover, the needs of persons with disabilities are often overlooked in the aftermath of disasters, especially during evacuations or in the early phases of humanitarian emergencies. Persons with disabilities may also face additional barriers when it comes to gaining access to services and assistance, including rehabilitation, mental health and psychosocial support, and assistive products. In the aftermath of natural disasters, rehabilitation services and mental health and psychosocial support are often insufficient and face increased demand owing to injuries and harm resulting from the disaster.

18. Emergency and disaster relief sites are often inaccessible to persons with disabilities, who may also encounter physical barriers preventing access to basic services, such as safe drinking water, food and sanitation, during an evacuation. In addition, an increase in discrimination on the basis of disability is possible when basic services and resources are limited. Persons with disabilities, particularly women, children and older persons with disabilities, are also more vulnerable to exploitation, violence and physical, sexual and emotional abuse in the aftermath of disasters. The needs of persons with disabilities are sometimes overlooked during longer-term recovery and reconstruction efforts.

19. Moreover, because persons with disabilities are poorly identified and registered of persons with disabilities, they are often underidentified during and in the aftermath of disasters, thus compromising the ability to identify and address barriers to accessing assistance. The underidentification of persons with disabilities is common because the identification process is often based on self-identification or on the perception of the registering officer. In some settings, individuals are reluctant to self-identify to avoid stigmatization. Those who do register tend only to record visible disabilities. As a result, sensory, intellectual, developmental and psychosocial disabilities are less likely to be identified. Additional challenges to identification include the isolation of persons with disabilities and the lack of awareness and knowledge of identification tools.

20. Furthermore, natural disasters tend to have a higher negative impact on households with persons with disabilities. Natural disasters can lead to a decrease in income and assets, as well as a reduction in food production, food stocks or food purchases in those households that were already vulnerable before the disaster hit.

21. Climate change disproportionately affects persons with disabilities as they may lack the resources to be able to adapt. In particular, indigenous persons with disabilities are among the first to face the direct consequences of climate change, owing to their close relationship with and dependence on the environment and its resources. Climate change exacerbates the challenges already faced by indigenous persons with disabilities, such as political and economic marginalization,

⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, [A/HRC/44/30](#).

discrimination and unemployment. However, the participation of indigenous persons with disabilities in climate action remains low.

22. In addition to being more exposed to the impacts of climate change, persons with disabilities may also be adversely affected by a State's response to climate change. For example, if a policy to reduce carbon emissions is designed without consultation with representative organizations of persons with disabilities, then increasing the price of fuel to encourage more frequent use of public transportation would be discriminatory against persons with disabilities if public transportation is not accessible to them. The green and digital transitions can give rise to similar barriers, but can also present great opportunities to rebuild society in a way that is more accessible, inclusive and resilient.

23. Gaps remain when it comes to fully realizing the participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters. It is still commonly believed that generic planning in that regard will meet the needs of all people, including persons with disabilities.

24. Persons with disabilities may have different needs during and after disasters and climate-related events, and those needs should be factored into disaster risk reduction planning and disaster responses. However, such an approach has often been compromised by an unclear allocation of responsibilities regarding the participation of persons with disabilities and a lack of disability awareness among Governments and humanitarian actors.

25. It is broadly agreed that exposure to extreme stressors can be harmful to mental health. Emergencies can severely disrupt social structures and impede the provision of ongoing formal and informal support to persons with disabilities. Socially isolated and marginalized people require specific outreach efforts.

IV. Ways forward: promoting the participation of persons with disabilities in human rights-based climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against climate events and other natural disasters

26. There is a growing number of general and disability-specific international normative frameworks on disaster risk reduction that provide the basis for guiding actors on how to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities and respect, protect and fulfil their rights. Moreover, in disaster response and emergency situations, States parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities should take account of all the provisions of the Convention in order to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are protected and that their basic needs are met, including when it comes to housing, access to water and sanitation, and health-care services.

27. States are increasingly becoming aware of the need to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities in planning on climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters. Such measures should be focused on involving persons with disabilities, such as by: (a) including representatives of persons with disabilities in disaster management committees that monitor and coordinate the implementation of emergency relief operations; and (b) engaging persons with disabilities in disaster risk analysis and assessment, as well as in awareness-raising activities on disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction.

28. Some countries have incorporated the needs of persons with disabilities into their national policies, laws and plans concerning humanitarian actions, such as by:

(a) considering the needs of persons with disabilities in policies, plans and programmes on preparedness and response to climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters; (b) adopting legislation requiring the Government to prioritize persons with disabilities in emergency activities (medical, housing and humanitarian assistance) in response to natural disasters; (c) establishing measures and aid actions to search for, rescue and evacuate persons with disabilities and provide them with primary health care; and (d) ensuring protection, rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration into social life for victims of natural disasters through acts that protect the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities. Training sessions for humanitarian actors on the needs of persons with disabilities are also becoming more common, with some training being focused on women and girls with disabilities.

29. Other initiatives have focused on post-disaster needs by providing cash transfers to persons with disabilities in the aftermath of a disaster. Efforts have also been made to use post-disaster reconstruction as an opportunity to improve the accessibility of the physical environment. Some States have developed guidance on disability-inclusive humanitarian actions, including for humanitarian actors engaged in assisting persons with disabilities and for persons with disabilities on what they can do to prepare for and recover from disasters.

30. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has exacerbated inequalities and increased complexities with regard to the participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters. However, the pandemic could serve as an opportunity to rethink how climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience can be more inclusive of persons with disabilities. Some specific measures, policies and good practices aimed at addressing the current challenges and finding entry points to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters are set out in the paragraphs below.

A. Ensuring that persons with disabilities, including women and children with disabilities, participate in decision-making processes, from planning to implementation, evaluation and monitoring

31. The best way to address the needs of persons with disabilities, significantly reduce their vulnerability and increase the effectiveness of government response and recovery efforts is to include persons with disabilities in all planning and programming phases. When Governments consider disaster policies or legislation, or when a community is developing an evacuation plan, an early warning system or making decisions related to combat climate change, it is crucial to ensure that persons with disabilities are included. The same is true with regard to the reconstruction phase so as to rebuild better infrastructure and community systems in the aftermath of a disaster.

32. The effective participation of persons with disabilities will also require the mobilization of adequate, timely and predictable resources to operationalize commitments for inclusive disaster preparedness and response, including by fostering close cooperation between States and organizations of persons with disabilities.

33. Moreover, it is crucial to secure the meaningful, informed and effective participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in climate change mitigation and adaptation at all levels, and to strengthen the capacities of persons with disabilities to respond to climate change by ensuring their ability to gain access to information about climate change and its impacts, as well as their participation in related decision-making processes and their enhanced social protection and climate resilience. This entails supporting a constituency for persons

with disabilities at climate negotiations and supporting the diversity and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the composition of national delegations participating in processes under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

B. Ensuring that disability-inclusive emergency preparedness, response and recovery information, commodities, infrastructures and services are accessible and inclusive

34. Universal design and accessibility features should be employed in all aspects of disaster risk reduction and disaster response. However, it should be noted that some persons with disabilities may require specialized services in the aftermath of disasters in addition to those mainstreaming efforts. It is therefore necessary to map the needs of specialized services and commodities and prepare them in consultation with persons with disabilities before crises even arise.

35. Persons with disabilities have the right to information in order to protect themselves and reduce their level of risk in a disaster. It is critical to ensure that humanitarian contexts, including climate action and disaster risk reduction, are accessible. For example, States parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities should address the availability of the technologies and systems for operationalizing accessible sign languages for deaf people across all aspects of disaster management, such as sign language interpretation, making information accessible through videos using automated sign language translators, and media briefings.

36. All post-disaster recovery efforts, including reconstruction and rebuilding, should be inclusive of persons with disabilities, including by applying the principles of universal design in all reconstruction and rebuilding programmes. Emphasis should be placed on accessibility features during the planning and reconstruction of infrastructure and public facilities, and on adopting accessible technologies and communication systems.

37. National policies and programmes should include operational standards and indicators on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in preparedness, planning and response for climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters. The standard operating procedures and operational manuals of the agencies involved in disaster response should contain clear guidance with regard to inclusion in disaster preparedness, planning and response of persons with disabilities.

C. Raising awareness among and building the capacity of persons with disabilities on disaster management plans at the local level, and enhancing the capacities and knowledge of policymakers and aid workers on the needs and strengths of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction and response

38. It is necessary to strengthen the capacity of persons with disabilities in the areas of disaster risk reduction and disaster response. This will not only contribute to the self-protection and survival of persons with disabilities, but also promote persons with disabilities as key contributors in disaster situations. Persons with disabilities can bring new or overlooked perspectives to planning and implementing disaster risk reduction and disaster response and can help others in the aftermath of a crisis. Athletes with disabilities can use their popularity to highlight climate change and encourage others with disabilities to get involved in action on climate change.

39. It is necessary to provide training on disability to all aid stakeholders at both the policy and practice levels. Aid workers should understand the perspectives, needs and strengths of persons with disabilities; this will prove useful when working for and with persons with disabilities in disaster situations. The hiring of persons with disabilities by humanitarian actors should also be encouraged and should not be limited solely to projects directly supporting persons with disabilities during and after disasters.

40. Pursuant to article 4 of the Convention, States parties have a general obligation to promote the training of professionals and staff working with persons with disabilities in the rights recognized in the Convention so as to better provide the assistance and services guaranteed by those rights. Government staff required to devise emergency preparedness programmes must be disability-aware in order to promote equal access for persons with disabilities, including by consulting and actively involving their representative organizations in climate action and disaster risk reduction policies and legislation.

D. Establishing and involving persons with disabilities in accountability mechanisms at the national level to address acts or omissions leading to discrimination against and exclusion of persons with disabilities in the context of disaster response

41. The participation of women and girls with disabilities in protection mechanisms in post-disaster contexts is key to recognizing and responding to the heightened risks of violence, abuse and exploitation faced by persons with disabilities, in particular women and children with disabilities. Adaptations should be made to ensure that gender-based violence prevention and response, as well as sexual and reproductive health services, are accessible to persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities, and to ensure that all health, legal, social and other services that deal with violence, exploitation and abuse are accessible to children, young persons and older persons with disabilities.

E. Undertaking, in consultation with persons with disabilities, evidence-based research and data collection on persons with disabilities relevant to disasters

42. Systematic analyses and reviews of a country's preparedness, resources and experiences related to disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and response should be carried out regularly and in consultation with persons with disabilities. In particular, data collection should be used to assess the overall numbers and the differing needs of persons with disabilities in certain communities and to define disaster risk reduction plans. Registers of persons with disabilities who may require support during disasters should be created.

43. Rapid assessments after disasters should include a disability perspective, informed by persons with disabilities themselves, and should provide for a systematic way to evaluate the magnitude and types of needs of persons with disabilities. It is not sufficient to assess the number of injuries and deaths among persons with disabilities. It is crucial to use reliable data in all phases of a disaster – before, during and after – while also paying attention to key but often neglected aspects, such as how to utilize new technologies, including cell phones and social media.

F. Assigning financial resources for disability inclusion

44. Inclusive policies require dedicated budgets, meaning that, in all planning and decision-making, appropriate financial resources must be assigned for disability inclusion, with specific reference being made to accessibility, reasonable accommodations and meaningful participation. This must be done at the earliest point of budget discussions. If exact costs are unknown, it is still essential to earmark a proportion of all funding to disability inclusion, based on estimations, while retaining flexibility in operating procedures so as to be able to adapt the budget line as and when challenges and solutions are identified.

V. Guiding questions for discussion by the panel

45. The following questions are presented for consideration by participants of the round-table discussion:

(a) What good examples are there of initiatives to remove barriers and promote the participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters? How can those good examples be scaled up or adapted to meet the needs associated with the COVID-19 crisis?

(b) What can be done by Governments, United Nations entities, donors, civil society, including organizations of persons with disabilities, and private actors to improve the participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters, and how can they work together to that end?

(c) What aspects should be considered to ensure that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations are able to sustainably, independently and meaningfully engage in the climate action and disaster risk reduction space in the medium to long term?

(d) What measures must States parties take to increase the availability and use of assistive technologies during and in the aftermath of disasters? What initiatives have been taken to address the unmet need for assistive technologies during and in the aftermath of disasters?

(e) What specific measures are there, in the public and private sectors alike, that have encouraged the creation of accessible emergency products and services that are inclusive of the needs of persons with disabilities, including through the use of universal design?

(f) How can Governments and other stakeholders ensure the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the COVID-19 recovery?

(g) How can community-driven data transform climate action and disaster risk reduction planning, including with organizations of persons with disabilities?

(h) How can Governments and other stakeholders ensure that systematic analyses and reviews of a country's preparedness, resources and experiences with regard to disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and response are carried out regularly and in consultation with representative organizations of persons with disabilities?