



## The Global Disability Summit – a rough guide / FAQ

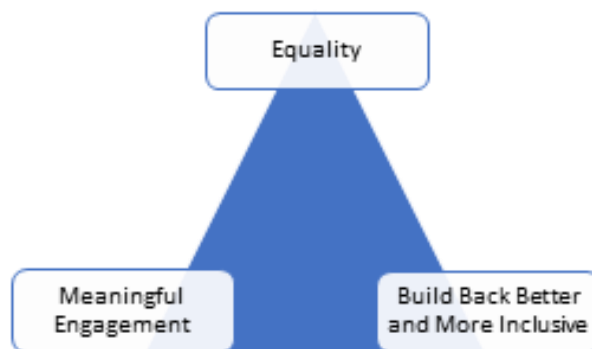
### What is the Global Disability Summit (GDS)?

The Global Disability Summit (GDS) 2022 is a global virtual event created to:

- 1) Shed light on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in development and humanitarian assistance, and
- 2) To agree on ways forward towards more disability inclusive development.

Concretely the GDS will produce a Charter / Declaration and a set of Commitments for participants to sign and deliver on.

The GDS 2022 is titled: *Lasting change for persons with disabilities through joint action*. It builds on the following triangular model, with Equality at the top, and Meaningful Engagement of DPOs below on the one side, and Building Back Better and More Inclusive Post- COVID-19 on the other:



The main theme of the GDS is Promoting Equality, and is rooted in the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([UNCRPD](#)). The GDS aims to achieve ground-breaking results for development aid as well as national policy. Today only 3 % of development aid is reported as inclusive of persons with disabilities (Norwegian numbers). This is far too low! 15 % of the World's population live with a disability. 80 % of these live in the Global South.

Time's now to get the priorities straight.

## **When is the GDS?**

The main event is the online Summit 16-17 February 2022. Prior to that there will be a Civil Society Forum on February 15<sup>th</sup> and a Global Disability Youth Summit February 14<sup>th</sup> (more below).

## **Who hosts the GDS 2022?**

The government of Norway, the Government of a partner country in the South, the International Disability Alliance (IDA), are responsible for the GDS 2022. The Atlas Alliance supports the hosts with civil society mobilizing, information spreading and advising the preparations.

## **What is the Background?**

The first GDS was held in London in 2018 and was a milestone for the disability movement. The second GDS will be online and take place in February 2022.

Awareness of human rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities is on the rise. However, inclusion remains a tick-box activity in humanitarian action and development work. Disability rights are explicitly mentioned in several targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, and Agenda 2030 is soaked in ambition with the slogan; “leave no one behind”. Still, there is a need to progress from plans to action.

The first [The Global Disability Summit](#) (GDS) was hosted by the International Disability Alliance (IDA), the Government of Kenya and Britain’s (then) Agency for Development (DfID). It was a concerted effort to put disability in development and humanitarian programmes firmly on the international agenda, as per article 11, “Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies”, and article 32, “International cooperation”, of the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD).

The GDS was described as the beginning of a worldwide movement lifting inclusive development and paving way for real, sustainable change. Its aim was to strengthen grassroots activism and call on donors, countries and stakeholders to make all ongoing efforts and new initiatives inclusive and promoting equality. The GDS emphasized and reasserted that representation matters, encapsulated by the phrase: “Nothing about us without us”.

## **Who will participate in the GDS, on 16-17 February?**

182 countries have ratified the UN CRPD. The leaders of these and the remaining countries of the World will be invited to participate in the main GDS event, and to sign the Charter and Commitments that are being prepared in advance. Also donors, private sector, research organisations, foundations, civil society organisations and multilaterals will be expected to attend, contribute and commit in the GDS.

## How are the Charter and Commitments being developed?

Consultations with Disabled Persons' Organisations (DPOs) in the Global South, led by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) have been ongoing since October 2020. Civil Society, with DPOs in the lead, is also organizing in different countries and contexts to collect input.

There are working groups put together by Norwegian MFA and NORAD working on reference documents for the five thematic areas under which the Commitments will be developed (more below). [Commitments made at the GDS 2018](#) and the [Charter for Change](#) that came out of the first GDS, can be found in these links.

The first draft "menu of commitments" will be developed by the above mentioned working groups after receiving input, by the end of October 2021. The final deadline for finalizing them is January 15th , 2022.

## What are the thematic Areas of the GDS 2022?

- Inclusion in crises and conflict (in line with CRPD, article 11),
- Capacity strengthening of organisations of persons with disabilities *in particular in* the Global South,
- Inclusive education (incl. technical and vocational training (TVET) in line with CRPD article 24 and SDG 4),
- Inclusive health (in line with CRPD articles 25-26 and SDGs 3,4 and 5), and
- Inclusive livelihoods (including social protection in line with CRPD articles 27-28 and SDG 8).

## What is the Civil Society Forum?

The Civil Society Forum will happen on February 15<sup>th</sup>. IDA and the Atlas Alliance, in consultation with a Civil Society Reference Group (CSRG) will organise the Civil Society Forum, as an addition to the GDS, to leverage the opportunity to amplify the voice and participation of persons with disabilities, through their individual participation and that of representative organisations (DPOs). The Civil Society Forum is open to all, and is an opportunity to highlight current issues relevant to the global disability movement and realization of the CRPD, that will not specifically be addressed at the GDS. The intention is not to duplicate the points that will be made the following two days, but rather to provide additional space for Civil Society to makes its own contribution to the overall GDS.

## What is the Youth Summit?

The Global Disability Youth Summit will be on February 14<sup>th</sup>. It is being organised by [Youth Mental Health Norway \(MHU\)](#) representing the Atlas Alliance, and [IDA Youth](#) in close cooperation with civil society organisations including DPOs from the Global South and relevant UN agencies. UN led networks, such as the Global Network of Young Persons with Disabilities, has been consulting for the past two years in preparation for the Youth Summit, in order to ensure the principle "nothing about us without us" is realized in the Youth Summit. The Youth Summit will also produce a Youth Charter for the participants to sign.

## **What are the Pre-Summits?**

There will be a Pre-Summit in Ghana during the first week of December 2021. This meeting has the objective to present the 'menu of commitments', and to promote regional and global dialogue in preparation to the GDS 2022. The Ghana Pre-Summit will be preceded by the Civil Society Forum, aiming to prepare DPOs and other CSOs to the event as well as by the Youth Pre-Summit where, young people with disabilities will deliberate on the relevant issues.

The European Development Fund (EDF) is also organising a European Summit on November 17<sup>th</sup> 2021. The objectives for this event are to gather relevant stakeholders working on disability rights in the region in preparation for GDS in order to ensure these stakeholders have full information about the GDS including what happened at the GDS in London and what progress was made since then. It further aims to explore the relevance of the GDS thematic areas for Europe, to present findings from European consultations, share countries' experiences on disability inclusive responses to COVID-19, consolidate consensus around disability concerns in Europe (and the countries in which EDF is engaged), and propose future solutions/commitments for a disability inclusive region.

Additional regional pre-summits are also being planned, among others in the Asia Pacific region. More information will come as plans materialize.

## **How can I / my Organisation follow the GDS?**

The entire GDS (all four days) will be online. Therefore, anyone, anywhere can follow the upcoming GDS, by the click of a link. The link will be available on the hosts' websites.

## **How can I / my Organisation influence the GDS?**

The best way to influence the GDS is to advocate towards your Government and to International NGOs to address your / your organisations' most burning issues. Such human rights advocacy should start by deciding what you / your organisation thinks your Government should change to ensure persons with disabilities' human rights are met in your country. Your country's representatives can bring to the GDS what they need to be able to meet these demands.

For support in such efforts one avenue to consider is this [Advocacy Toolkit](#) developed by [SAFOD](#) and [the Atlas Alliance](#). Following the steps outlined in this document you / your organisation could gather relevant civil society actors, i.e. your DPO federation, and plan your campaign.

## **What is the Global Advocacy Campaign?**

The Atlas Alliance and IDA, as the main civil society actors involved in the GDS, has initiated a global Advocacy Campaign. This campaign will look different in all countries, as it will be led by national DPOs and contextually adapted. However, it could also share some hashtags for wider reach in social media, and of course the same information about the GDS. These details have not yet been worked out, but stay tuned for more as planning progresses...



The Advocacy Campaign is to take place in as many countries as possible provided that DPOs take on the task.

The upcoming GDS gives the disability movement a major opportunity to lift their cause and change the world. The GDS has the potential to achieve national and global policy changes, and lead to significant improvements in the lives of persons with disabilities – the World's largest minority by far. But for that to happen disability rights must be moved to the forefront of the World leaders' attention.

Therefore, civil society needs to organize. Representative organisations, such as DPOs, are best placed to drive the Global Advocacy Campaign, and support to get started can be found in the link above (the Advocacy Toolkit).

The Human Rights of one billion people are at stake! One in seven people around the globe are disabled – the vast majority living in conflict-affected, developing- and low-income countries. Only 10 % of children with disabilities in developing countries attend school. Attitudinal barriers in too many countries leave persons with disabilities locked up and hidden away. And yet, no more than 3 % of international aid targeted persons with disabilities from 2014 to 2018. Policies and practices must change. Time's now!

Time's now, to address decision makers in your countries, and beyond. Time's now, to challenge national budgets and priorities. Time's now, to flag your struggles and demand your rights. If not now, then when? If not us, then who?

**Time's now, to make the world inclusive!**

### **Who to contact?**

For more information, please contact Lykke Stavnes at [lykke.stavnes@atlas-alliansen.no](mailto:lykke.stavnes@atlas-alliansen.no)