



Side-event: FULL INCLUSION IN EDUCATION – POSSIBLE BY 2030?

10th session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD

13 June 1:15-2:30pm

Conference room E

Organised by: World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)

Co-sponsors:

Permanent Mission of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations

Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities

International Disability Alliance

Gallaudet University

Panellists:

Mr Florjan Rojba, World Federation of the Deaf

Mr Ram Kushal Pant, National Federation of the Deaf in Nepal

Dr Marlon Kuntze, Gallaudet University

Dr Krister Schönström, Stockholm University

Ms Irmgarda Kasinskaite-Buddeberg, UNESCO

Moderator: Ms Eeva Tupi, World Federation of the Deaf

Article 24 of the CRPD implores States Parties to recognise the right of persons with disabilities to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity. An obligation is placed on national Governments to provide an inclusive education environment with the implicit intention that students can both fulfil their academic potential and maximise social development by being able to engage with their peers. This is simply rhetoric if education is not accessible to students.

For deaf children, the language of instruction is key.

Bilingual or multilingual education in which the primary language of instruction is national sign language/s supported by written language(s) leads to the best outcomes for deaf children. Quality education facilitates effective participation in society with deaf individuals being able to exercise choice and control in their lives and fulfil their broader human rights, namely the right to employment, to health services, to information, to safety, and to enjoyment of social and cultural rights.

Recognition of national sign languages, promotion of their use in all spheres of life and ensuring that sign language is accorded equal status relative to national spoken languages is the first step towards creating the necessary pre-conditions for sign language use in primary, secondary and tertiary learning environments and therefore inclusive education for deaf students.

The CRPD has taken a positive and proactive approach to encouraging and promoting sign languages in deaf children's education and as we move into the second decade of the CRPD, there is a need to ensure that Governments abide by their international human rights obligations.

This side event will be evidence based and solutions-focussed, highlighting the importance of language acquisition, showcasing examples of best practice in education including from the Global South and providing practical ways in which States Parties can not only facilitate optimal educational outcomes for deaf children but ultimately full participation by deaf persons in society.

International Sign interpretation and captioning will be provided