



#CSW68 Our agenda too: Women with disabilities advocating for rights-based & inclusive systems of care & support



Tuesday 19 March, 8.30-10am EST
Ford Foundation Center for Social Justice
320 E 43rd St New York
Register [here](#)

* This is an in-person event. Registration is mandatory & will close on Sunday 17 March at 11.59pm.

Accessibility: International Sign interpretation, real-time captioning, wheelchair accessible



Moderators:

- Monica Alemann, Ford Foundation
- Catherine Hyde-Townsend, Ford Foundation
- Mina Mojtahedi, UN Disability Inclusion Team, Executive Office of the Secretary General

Opening remarks: Ambassador Lisa Carty, US, Alicia Herbert OBE, UK's Special Envoy for Gender Equality (via video message), Finland

Speakers:

- Beatrice Mahmood, Voice of Women and Children with Disabilities in Ghana
- Ati Maulin, Indonesian Mental Health Association
- Zainab Mustapha, Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities of Nigeria (JONAPWD)
- Alberto Vásquez Encalada, Center for Inclusive Policy
- Gopal Mitra, UNICEF
- Faye Macheke, Co-Executive Director, Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)
- Mukhabbat Rakhimova, Sharoit-Plus Uzbekistan (video message)

Closing remarks: Mexico, Asako Hattori, Women's Human Rights & Gender Section, OHCHR, Natalia Mattioli, UNPRPD Technical Secretariat

Objective

This side event will bring together women with disabilities, governments, researchers, UN, donors and representatives from the feminist movement to reflect on how to move together towards inclusive and gender responsive services and support – a critical precondition to economic equality. Access to inclusive support services and systems, such as inclusive social protection, personal assistance, accessible transportation, inclusive SRH services, assistive devices and technology are all essential parts of an inclusive care and support system – a system that is essential for the economic participation of women and girls with disabilities. Access to inclusive and gender responsive services and support is a critical issue that is often overlooked within the broader economic and gender justice frameworks.

The event will unpack the systemic disadvantage and overlapping barriers that push women and girls with disabilities into poverty, and to frame this within the collective struggle against gender inequality and economic injustice. Women with disabilities will highlight barriers they face in advocating for inclusive social protection systems and support services – services and support that are essential to participation. They will share experiences as contributors

to their communities and economies; as providers and receivers of care and support, and as agents of change.

Context

- Multiple factors interact and serve as both cause and consequence for the structural inequality and impoverishment of women and girls with disabilities, including:
 - less access to education – children with disabilities are 49% more likely than other children to have never attended school, and girls with disabilities are less likely to complete primary school than boys with disabilities.¹
 - less access to employment opportunities and less levels of earning
 - Pervasive stigma and beliefs that women and girls with disabilities cannot be productive members of society
 - disability-related extra costs (assistive technologies, human assistance, accessible transport, accessible housing, as well as increased costs of healthcare, energy, etc.)
 - limited accessibility and access to community support services, which leads to time depletion and limited participation
 - absence of social protection mechanisms that take into account the above,
 - lack of investment and budgeting in disability responsive and gender transformative services and support
 - greater depletion of time due to providing unpaid care and support within their families

- The COVID-19 pandemic has put a spotlight on the essential role of care and support to keep our economies and societies running, that falls disproportionately on women and girls, including women and girls with disabilities, who are unpaid or low paid and devalued as workers in this context. Care economy discussions are now high on the agenda, with a focus on the workers providing care to ensure respect for their labour rights and their dignity. In order to effectively transform the care economy, the rights, dignity and voices of both the workers- the care and support providers, and the care and support receivers need to be at the centre of discussions, including women and girls with disabilities. Furthermore, transforming systems and services of care and support for persons with disabilities must be seen as essential not only so that persons with disabilities can live independently and participate but to enable women with disabilities to access education and work towards greater economic equality for all.