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# Disability Debrief: an international update on persons with disabilities in the COVID-19 crisis

This is the September 2020 edition of [Disability Debrief](#), a newsletter from [Peter Torres Fremlin](#). Subscribe there for further updates.

## About

This is an update on disability news around the world relating to the COVID-19 crisis, from late April to the end of September 2020. It's a snapshot of news, statistics, policy, and experiences of persons with disabilities around the world in the upheavals of this year. I'm sorry to say that a lot of it is bad news, but we draw heart from the many ways that people have responded, and these are featured too.

You can see previous updates on the pandemic and its results [from April](#), and those from [26 March](#) and [18 March](#). If you love disability news that isn't to do with COVID-19, see [the June update](#).

This edition is produced with support from [Center for Inclusive Policy](#).

## Disclaimer

This snapshot comes from news shared online. While there is information from all over the world, accidents of language and availability mean that some areas, like China, are sadly missing, and some areas, like the UK and USA are overrepresented. I share these links for information and some may already be out-of-date or need further fact-check.

## Acknowledgements

This collection of links is a small recognition of the untold work people around the world have done to protect our lives and fight for the conditions for us to live well.

Thanks to everyone that shares so openly disability news on social media; and to the many of you who have corresponded with me in one way or another. In particular thanks to the contributions of Andre Felix for generosity with ideas and to Jessie Meaney-Davis for a valuable collection of links.

These newsletters are produced by me, Peter Torres Fremlin. Any opinions or mistakes are mine. Many thanks for Center for Inclusive Policy's support to this edition.

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# Overview

## Where we are now

Persons with disabilities across the world came into the COVID-19 crisis already marginalised. While governments have in recent years, made more ambitious commitments on disability, these had not been realised. The situation of existing marginalisation and limited government support have been made even worse in the past few months, where disabled people around the world have been devastated.

We do not know the extent of the devastation, and this is part of the problem. Very few countries have gathered data — let alone good data — on what happened to persons with disabilities during this crisis. One country that did, the United Kingdom, showed that persons with disabilities were twice as likely to die from COVID-19 as persons without disabilities, even after adjusting for age and other demographic circumstances. There is no reason to think this statistic would necessarily be better in countries that overlook this analysis.

At the same time as these costs in life and health, there is immediate economic hardship for persons with disabilities. In the United States in March and April alone, one million persons with disabilities lost their work. Their labour force participation decreased 20% compared to the 14% for persons without disabilities. Surveys from the majority world show urgent predicament of people who do not have enough money to get by and who have lost the often tenuous sources of income they had.

All this happens in the context of the challenges we pointed to in March and April, of isolation and lack of assistance, discrimination in medical treatment, and interruption of disability-related services. The COVID-19 crisis has cruelly exposed the disparities in unequal societies and the gaps in the systems meant to support people.

It didn't have to be this bad. But it can still get a lot worse. While many countries have made some disability-related initiative as a response to the problems that have arisen, these are often small adjustments rather than the substantial supported needed to survive the further public health and economic challenges. The health emergency continues and protections for persons with disabilities, and many others, are still not there. Many countries are no longer pursuing the strict confinement or lockdown approaches they took earlier in the year, and the more open approach also creates considerable issues for persons with disabilities that need resolution.

A profound crisis is also a substantial transformation, which is not without positives. The links below show attention to disability not just from the more-active-than-ever disability community, but from mainstream media and from international development partners. (Sadly, they do not show the same attention from governments.) For some, although definitely not all, persons with disabilities the acceleration of going online have enabled types of social participation and work that were not possible before.

One of the greatest tragedy of the past months has been the devastation of long-term care facilities, institutions and other closed settings. Almost 50% of persons who died from COVID-19 were living in some form of closed setting or a so-called “care” facility.

Deinstitutionalisation is an urgent issue for the disability community and now has become one for the world.

In some ways I will repeat myself. I admit my updates are part of the problem on this, but too much of our work on disability continues not to engage substantially with issues of age, gender, and other identity issues. There are many opportunities to make a new world, and we have to fight for it to be a better one. I feel we will be more successful the more allies we have with us and the more we can frame our issues as contributions to the upheavals that our societies and economies are undergoing.

## Something I worked on: COVID-19 and the world of work

With my friends at the **International Labour Organization** I worked a to write a policy brief on [COVID-19 and the World of Work](#): Ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities at all stages of the response (June). This was a moving target as everything changed in the first few months of the pandemic. But it was clear to us that we urgently need to show how persons with disabilities need to be in employment and economic policy going forward.

The brief covers how interim confinement measures relating to employment and social protection can be made inclusive; then how persons with disabilities can be included in socio-economic response to the crisis; and the opportunity to make long-lasting change:

The immediate response to the crisis, if disability inclusive, will shape new and better opportunities for persons with disabilities in the future. If visibility and participation of persons with disabilities in the socioeconomic response is ensured, it will be a foundation for their role in the recovery. Globally, disability inclusion needs to be fully embedded in the international cooperation efforts that will support the recovery from the crisis.

See more on other work the ILO has done below.

# What happened so far

## Data on COVID-19 and mortality

Note that data on mortality in this period may be caused by COVID-19 diseases, factors relating to the COVID-19 crisis, or other reasons entirely.

### UK

In **England and Wales**, an [analysis of COVID-19 deaths combined with census data](#) on disability status shows that between March and July females with disabilities were 2.4 times likely to die than females without disabilities, and men with disabilities 2 times more likely to die than men without. This is after adjusting for age and other demographic characteristics: disabled people made up for 59% of deaths, when they were only 16% of this population. (September, Office for National Statistics) Reactions include:

- [Two in three victims of Covid-19 had a disability](#) (July, The Times).
- Call for [inquiry and urgent action after 'shocking' disability death stats](#) (June, Disability News Service)

[Excess deaths in domiciliary care](#): “In England from 10 April to 8 May, deaths of recipients of domiciliary care were 2.7 times the three year average for that period.” (July, The BMJ)

Deaths in [mental health hospitals double as COVID-19 spreads](#). (May, Independent)

Pandemic sees spike in [learning disabled deaths](#) (June, BBC). Excess deaths among persons with learning disabilities, based on data from care providers. [Hundreds of learning disability deaths in just eight weeks](#) (May, Independent)

[Almost 10,000 unexplained extra deaths among people with dementia](#) in England and Wales in April (June, The Guardian). In *addition* to deaths attributed to COVID-19:

The charity thinks the increased numbers of deaths from dementia are resulting partly from increased cognitive impairment caused by isolation, the reduction in essential care as family carers cannot visit, and the onset of depression as people with dementia do not understand why loved ones are no longer visiting, causing them to lose skills and independence, such as the ability to speak or even stopping eating and drinking. ([The Guardian](#))

### USA

Data from **New York** and **Pennsylvania** show [COVID-19 Infections And Deaths Are Higher Among Those With Intellectual Disabilities](#) (June, NPR). States collecting data show persons with intellectual disabilities more likely to contract the virus, and 2 or 2.5 times more likely to die.

See also a paper on [intellectual and developmental disability and COVID-19 case-fatality trends](#) (July, Disability and Health Journal).

Assessment of [intellectual and developmental disability and COVID-19 case-fatality trends](#) (May, Disability and Health Journal). “COVID-19 appears to present a greater risk to people with IDD, especially at younger ages”. [See discussion](#). (June, Disability Scoop)

## Care homes and institutional settings

Early international evidence shows that “on average the share of all COVID-19 deaths that were care home residents is 47% (based on 26 countries)”. From [summary of mortality associated with COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes](#). See latest [international reports on COVID-19 and long-term care](#). (International Long Term Care Policy Network)

Some **historical context** points towards the 1918 flu pandemic [also having ravaged group living facilities in the USA](#). (April, Boston Globe)

Webinar from from **Alzheimer's Disease International**, The [hidden casualties of COVID-19: Challenges in long term care](#) (June).

In **Canada**,

- [Canada’s “national shame”: Covid-19 in nursing homes](#). Nursing homes account for 81 percent of Covid-19 deaths in the country. How did this happen? (July, Vox)

In **Europe** there was “divergence in the reporting and monitoring of infection rates and deaths within care homes”:

Ireland is notable in that its mortality data included care home deaths from the outset. Many other countries began to report deaths in care homes later in the crisis (e.g. France and Hungary from early April; Finland from mid-April and England from late-April). Norway to date has not published a national overview of deaths in care homes. Iceland and Israel include care home deaths but do not separate them from deaths in other settings (although in Iceland, death from COVID number only 10 in total).

[What measures have been taken to protect care homes during the COVID-19 Crisis?](#) (June, COVID-19 Health Systems Response Monitor)

In the **UK**,

- Survey to assess [impact of coronavirus in care homes in England between May and June](#) (July, Office for National Statistics)
- Model [predicts that over 50% of deaths in UK](#) will be people who are residents of care homes. (June, The Guardian)

In the **USA**,

- About [40% of U.S. Coronavirus Deaths Are Linked to Nursing Homes](#) (September, New York Times). “While 7 percent of the country’s cases have occurred in long-term care facilities, deaths related to Covid-19 in these facilities account for about 40 percent of the country’s pandemic fatalities.”

- Data compiled from 47 states [shows over 76,000 deaths related to COVID-19](#) in long-term care facilities by the start of September. (KFF)
- Overlooked and Undercounted: [The Growing Impact of COVID-19 on Assisted Living Facilities](#). Over 2,651 reported deaths among residents and staff assisted-living facilities although most States do not report them. (September, KFF)
- [Nursing homes might account for 40% of US COVID-19 deaths](#) (June, CIDRAP)
- [‘A national disgrace’: 40,600 deaths tied to US nursing homes](#), (June, USA Today). At start of June, 40% of attributed deaths in USA were long-term care residents and workers.
- New Jersey group homes for people with disabilities [see deaths and cases rise sharply](#). (May, Burlington County Times)

## Impact on persons with disabilities

In **low- and middle-income countries**, an evidence review of [financial and economic impacts of COVID-19 on people with disabilities](#) (June, Disability Inclusion Helpdesk, and I helped a bit too)

- People with disabilities are losing work and income, social protection isn't enough and often not accessible. The review highlights evidence from around the world.
- See discussion of the evidence in the [cost of leaving women and people with disabilities behind during the COVID-19 global economic downturn](#) (August, Jessie Meaney-Davies).

In **Asia and Pacific** region, focussing on low- and middle-income countries, a review of [current evidence on experiences of persons with disabilities in COVID-19](#) (link to pdf, June, DID4All). Highlights people not having access to regular services and support as well as a “severe reduction in employment and income as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions”. “Notably, much of this impact arises from barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing government support.”

From **Women Enabled International**, [COVID-19 at the Intersection of Gender and Disability](#) (link to pdf) A survey completed by 100 women, non-binary, and trans persons with disabilities across the globe in March and April.

From **Institute of Development Studies**, [emerging findings on the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities](#). Interviews with 40 persons with disabilities in Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda. (September).

From **UNITAR** and others, [Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Persons with Disabilities](#) (May)

Gender and disability in [informal settlements during COVID-19](#): What we have learnt so far (June, LSE Blog)

[How did the Corona crisis affect persons with special needs?](#) Mainly in the Middle East. (in Arabic, May, Vice)

## By country



### In **Australia**,

- New Report Illustrates [Experiences of COVID-19 for Women with Disabilities](#) (July, Global Accessibility News)

### In **Bangladesh**,

- [Survey on the impact of COVID-19](#) on the lives of persons with disabilities in April/May. 80% of respondents were unable to work. (link to pdf, i2i)
- [Impact of COVID-19 on lives and livelihoods of Women with Disabilities](#) a video from Munní Dey with editing from CDD. (July, link to facebook)

### In **Chile**,

- Survey on 400 persons with disabilities on the [effect of the pandemic](#) shows around 30% lost work. (in Spanish, June, El Mostrador)

### In **Egypt**,

- [‘We Couldn’t Find One Hospital Bed For Her’](#) a person with intellectual disability died after being denied hospital treatment.

### In **Ghana**,

- [The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on deaf adults, children and their families in Ghana](#) (September, The British Academy)

### In **India**,

- A survey of 82 women with disabilities: [Neglected and Forgotten](#) (link to pdf, July, Rising Flame and Sightsavers)
- The [Impact of COVID 19 on People with Developmental Disability and their Families: Perceptions of Families, Allies, Advocates and Professionals](#) (May, Keystone Institute India)
- a survey finds that 73 per cent of persons with disabilities [interviewed were facing severe challenges on account of the lockdown](#) (May, The Indian express)
- [Locked Down and Left Behind](#), a survey by NCPEDP.

### In **Ireland**,

- The Experiences of [Adults with Intellectual Disabilities in Ireland During the Covid-19 Crisis](#) (link to pdf, September, Inclusion Ireland)

### In **Kenya**,

- Survey on the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of persons with disabilities in April/May. (link to pdf, i2i)

### In **Nepal**,

- Rapid Assessment of [Impact of COVID-19](#) (Google Drive) on 130 persons with and without disabilities in Kailali municipality. From Disability Holistic Development Service Organization. (May)
- COVID-19 and its [impact on Persons with Disabilities and Marginalized Groups](#) (link to pdf, April, NIDWAN)
- [Dalits with disabilities hit hardest by lockdown in Nepal](#) (July, Minority Rights Group)

#### In India,

- [Chennai: Disabled son left to fend for self as both parents test positive for coronavirus](#) (May, Times of India)

#### In Uganda,

- A poll on [Knowledge and awareness on Coronavirus among persons with disabilities](#) and also on the impact on [individual mental health](#). (June, Make 12.4% work). Discussion of these findings: [Let's Talk about COVID-19 and disability](#) (LFTW)

#### In Spain,

- Report on the [impact and effects of the COVID-19 crisis on persons with disabilities](#) from a survey of 1460 people. (in Spanish, link to pdf, Fundación Once and dismet)

#### In the UK,

- Coronavirus and the [social impacts on disabled people in Great Britain](#): July 2020 (August, Office of National Statistics). “Their concerns about well-being and accessing healthcare were higher than among non-disabled people. We saw differences too, in behaviours. Disabled people were more likely to go out to attend medical appointments or take care of others than non-disabled people were, and less likely to be socialising and eating out.”
- The impact on of COVID-19 on [disabled people in Northern Ireland](#) (September, Disability Action).
- [Abandoned, forgotten and ignored](#) Inclusion London report on the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities. (June)
- [Left in Lockdown](#), a survey of over 4,000 families of children with disabilities (June, Disabled Childrens Partnership)
- [An unequal crisis](#): “1 in 4 disabled people (27%) are facing redundancy, rising to 37% for those people whose disability has a substantial impact on their activities” (August, Citizens advice)
- “Disabled employees working from home during lockdown say they have been more productive and took fewer days off sick than when they were doing their jobs in the office” according to a [survey by UNISON of 4,000 disabled workers across the UK](#). Some [discussion on BBC](#). (August)
- Greater Manchester Disabled People's Panel [Big Disability Survey - Covid19](#)
- Five disabled children [die by suicide in one county in lockdown](#) (July, Disability Rights UK)

- A survey in April, of over 3000 people, 20% of whom had disabilities, show the pressure [women with disabilities are in under lockdown](#). (June, Fawcett Equality)
- [The Impact of COVID 19 on Disabled Women from Sisters of Frida](#) (link to PDF, May, Sisters of Frida).
- A special report into the [impact of coronavirus on people with learning disabilities](#) (short video, May, BBC Breakfast)
- In April, [Doreen, who lived in an assisted living facility, contracted Covid-19](#). “Her family are devastated by her death, and believe she would still be alive today had she not been disabled” - essay exploration from the Guardian (September)

In the USA,

- [COVID Recession Hits Workers with Disabilities Harder](#) from the nTIDE April 2020 Jobs Report. (August, Kessler Foundation). Almost 1 million persons with disabilities left the labour force from March to April, a decrease in 20%, compared to decrease of 14% for persons without disabilities.
- [Workers With Disabilities Disproportionately Impacted By Covid-19 Pandemic](#) (June, Forbes)

In **Vietnam**, findings of a [rapid assessment of the socio-economic impact on persons with disabilities](#) (May, UNDP).

## Gathering data and the gaps

### COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor

[The COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor](#) is a global survey on the situation of persons with disabilities conducted by a coalition including IDA, IDDC and others. The has captured over 1800 responses from 128 countries. Their statement at the opening of the CRPD session [shares preliminary findings](#). (August, DRM)

See more background on [the launch](#) (April, IDA), or the [launch of the dashboard](#) (IDDC). [Initial data](#) is available as are a [selection of the voices](#).

The survey is live and can be [disseminated further](#) among persons with disabilities, government organisations and all related stakeholders.

### Data collection and where data isn't being collected

In early June, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for Sustainable Development **could not find countries that were disaggregating data by disability**: see a [summary by Elizabeth Lockwood, or the report](#) (pdf)

[Collecting data in the age of COVID-19](#): Will persons with disabilities be left out? (July, UNICEF Evidence for Action)

[Making Open Data Inclusive During a Pandemic](#) (July, Victor Santiago Pineda)

The inclusion of persons with disabilities in [coronavirus data collection efforts needs to be business as usual](#) (May, Leonard Cheshire)

Webinar on [statistics on disability and effective public policies during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). (in Spanish with sign-language, June, RIADIS)

In **Bangladesh**, Mapping surveys of persons with disabilities [via motorbike in Bangladesh](#) (May, Sightsavers)

In **Russia**, call to [Publish Data About Covid-19 in Institutional Care](#) (June, Human Rights Watch)

## Experiences of Persons with Disabilities

### Key Resource

[Voices of People with Disabilities During the COVID19 Outbreak](#) - an important collection of stories from **IDA** and others from around the world, linking the personal and political.

### Around the world

**CBM** showcases video diaries in [Coronavirus: My Story](#) featuring persons with disabilities from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal and Zimbabwe. (June)

In **Canada**, A conversation with [Maayan Ziv on COVID and people living with disabilities](#) (July, Women of Influence)

In **Burkina Faso**, [Sonia, hard of hearing: "My future depends on going to college!"](#) (Humanity and Inclusion)

In **Ethiopia**, [No customers, no income for Mohamed a father of 10](#) (Humanity and Inclusion)

In **India**, Fifteen-year-old in India [cycles 745 miles home with disabled father on bike](#) (May, The Guardian)

From **Finland**, Inclusion Europe president writes on [13 weeks of heart-breaking separation](#) (June)

In **Latin America**, [listening to each other inside \(and outside\) of Zoom](#), experiences from young persons with disabilities (in Spanish, June, META)

In the **Philippines**, [experience of persons with disabilities](#) in the Philippines during COVID-19 crisis. (Youtube, August, Abner Manlapaz)

In the **UK**,

- [Between two communities: observations of COVID-19 as a disabled and non-binary person](#) (May, Amplify)

In the USA,

- The New Mobility magazine feature on [Life in the Time of COVID-19](#) (May)
- The [Contra\\*](#) podcast has done a series of Solidarity Chats, “these episodes, recorded during the COVID-19 pandemic, focus on disability, eugenics, and mutual aid.” See the first with [Arriana Planey](#) and more on the [podcast feed](#). (With transcripts)

In **Zambia**, experiences from [disabled people’s organizations](#). (Sightsavers)

## Disability in response

### International Response

The **Secretary General of the United Nations** released a [policy-brief on a disability-inclusive response to COVID-19](#). "We have a unique opportunity to design and implement more inclusive and accessible societies." (May) I say more about this in the one piece of COVID-19 news in the [June Disability Debrief](#).

- In response to this policy brief, a joint-statement on disability-inclusive response to COVID-19, [Towards a Better Future for All](#), was made by 138 member states and observers. (May)
- The UN [Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020](#) highlights the situation of persons with disabilities as among the hardest hit by the pandemic.

A [Call To Action](#) was made by the co-chairs of the **Global Action on Disability Network (GLAD)**, by development partners and IDA and endorsed by over 180 other organizations. The call is “to all stakeholders to include persons with disabilities in the response and recovery phases of the Covid-19.” See the [Virtual High-Level Round-Table](#) (June) where the call was launched.

- Also available: [press release](#), [short video of key messages](#) and [video message from persons with disabilities on COVID-19](#).

The **Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** made a [statement on COVID-19 and the human rights of persons with disabilities](#). See also the context of one of the Vice Chair's experiences: [months in fear, anxiety and confusion: the life of people with disabilities in COVID-19](#). (June)

**UNDESA** policy brief on [Leaving no one behind: the COVID-19 crisis through the disability and gender lens](#) (May)

The **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights** urged countries [to take extra steps to include people with disabilities](#) (April, OHCHR)

**Sightsavers** on [how to make the COVID-19 response inclusive for people with disabilities](#). (May)

The **Equal Rights Trust**, call to action [Addressing discrimination and inequality in the global response to COVID-19](#) (link to pdf, May). IDA, IDDC and others joined this joint-statement.

From **International Disability Alliance**, the [missing millions from the gender lens discussion of COVID-19](#) (May)

From **Inclusion International**, a [webinar series](#) covering topics from participation, education, employment, and more.

From the **International Labour Organization** (ILO),

- "[A disability-inclusive response means a better response for us all.](#)" (June, short video)
- Webinar on [promoting inclusion of persons with disabilities in the socio-economic response to COVID-19](#). (In Spanish, International Sign-Language and Venezuelan Sign-Language, June, together with RIADIS).

A statement from **Minority, Indigenous and other Marginalised Communities** on the [impact of COVID-19 of persons with disabilities in those communities](#) (April, Minority Rights Group) The COVID-19 pandemic has had a [major impact on an indigenous peoples, particularly those with disabilities](#). (July, ILO Blog)

From **CBR Africa Network**, Report on the [Impact of COVID-19 on Persons with Disabilities in Africa](#) (link to pdf), discusses survey of its member organizations.

From **Cities for All**, [Empowering Local Governments on Inclusive Pandemic Response](#) (link to pdf).

See a [summary of how persons with disabilities were highlighted](#) in the UN **High-Level Political Forum**. "Despite the positive trend of inclusion of persons with disabilities in high-level UN events, especially related to the pandemic, the reality is that at the field level, it has been challenging to include all groups into response and recovery COVID plans." (July, Elizabeth Lockwood).

Guidance from **OHCHR** on [COVID-19 and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#). (April, link to pdf) See also an internal toolkit from the **Human Rights Treaty Branch**, [treaty law perspectives and jurisprudence in the context of COVID-19](#) with a section on the CRPD (link to pdf, July, OHCHR)

From **Sense International and other organizations**, [Covid-19 Response and Rebuilding Principles](#) (April)

From **Sightsavers**, guidance for development partners on [including people with disabilities in responses to the COVID-19 pandemic](#). (link to pdf, May)

From **UNDESA**, [Responding to COVID-19 and Recovering Better](#) (link to pdf, July). Discussion of overall economic and social trends with section on disability and gender.

From **UNFPA**, an infographic on [COVID-19 and Persons with Disabilities: Key Messages](#) (May)

Webinars from **IDA and IDDC** on [CRPD-Compliant Covid19 response and recovery](#) (June). Two webinars, covering: non-discrimination, accessibility, humanitarian action, social protection, education and health.

## Commentary

[International human rights bodies, disability and Covid-19](#) (September, Doughty Street Chambers)

Why Covid-19 [response and recovery plans can't afford to forget people with disabilities](#) (September, bond)

[Coronavirus 'starkly' exposes vulnerability of persons with disabilities](#), blog, (August, UN Social Development Network)

How COVID-19 is [Affecting Persons with Disabilities Worldwide: Finding Opportunity in Adversity](#) (August, Portulans Institute)

Will the [SDGs be Still Relevant After the Pandemic for Persons with Disabilities](#)? a write-up of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities side event at the UN (July, Elizabeth Lockwood).

[3 ways to improve COVID-19 response to elderly care and persons with disabilities](#) (July, World Bank)

Persons with disabilities must not bear the brunt of COVID-19 aftermath: [lessons from Ebola in Liberia](#) (link to pdf, Social Development Direct)

The COVID-19 response and recovery from an **urban perspective**:

- [Defining the New Normal for People With Disabilities and Older Persons in Cities](#) (June, Victor Santiago Pineda)
- [Combating Myths and Threats to Older Persons During a Pandemic](#). (July, Victor Santiago Pineda)
- [Resilience and Recovery Strategies](#) for People with Disabilities in Response to a Pandemic (August, Victor Santiago Pineda)

Opinion: [Remaining agile and competent during the coronavirus pandemic](#) - on the situation of persons with disabilities and how **CBM** has responded. (August, Devex)

[Opinion: 5 ways to meet the needs of people with disabilities during pandemics](#) (July, Devex)

Community based workers [can help disabled people access services during COVID-19](#) (May, The Conversation)

[How to ensure a disability-inclusive response to COVID-19](#) (May, Devex)

## Campaigns

IDA and IDDC launched an [End-Discrimination Campaign](#) “to call to raise awareness of examples of the discrimination that persons with disabilities experience in accessing services and call on the global community on the critical and urgent need to deliver disability inclusive COVID-19 responses at global, national and local levels.”

The **Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities** (AOPD) issued a call for action for Inclusion of [Women with Disabilities and Migrant Women Workers in Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plans](#) (July, IDA)

## Gaps in response

IDA and IDDC's [joint-reaction](#) (link to docx) to the WHO's [World Health Assembly Resolution](#) (link to pdf) in May noted some positive areas and some gaps:

We applaud the specific call for national action plans to integrate age- and disability-sensitive and gender responsive measures across government sectors against COVID-19.

It is disappointing to acknowledge that the Resolution does not integrate aspects that are essential to build inclusive prevention, response, and evaluation plans: there is **no reference to the need to collect disability disaggregated data and to make COVID-19 information accessible to everyone**. Specific reference to the need to protect and promote the health of persons living in institutions and care facilities that have been particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 is also lacking.

## Collections of resources

The [International Disability Alliance](#) has extensive resources and continuing work. So does the [European Disability Forum](#).

Others include:

- **Ask Source** database of [resources on coronavirus and disability](#).
- **Bridging the Gap** [list of resources to include persons with disabilities](#) in COVID-19 response (July)
- **IDDC** [COVID-19 and Disability inclusion](#)
- **UNPRPD** has compiled a [list of resources on COVID-19 and disability inclusion](#). (May)

## On related topics...

[Corona Older](#): a Global Platform on COVID-19 and Older Adults in Low- and Middle-Income Countries.

## Country and Regional Approaches



## Asia Pacific

UNESCAP Webinar on [Protecting and Empowering Persons with Disabilities in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (May)

## Australia

Australia has an [Advisory Committee for the COVID-19 Response for People with Disability](#).

Australians with disabilities ['sidelined' during coronavirus pandemic](#) (July, SBS News)

The significance of [research to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) (May, Research and Practice in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities)

## Bangladesh

[Facing COVID-19 with a disability](#), (May, BRAC)

## Brazil

COVID-19 and the [invisibility of persons with disabilities](#) (In Portuguese, May, Radis)

## Ethiopia

Viewpoint: [The 'Forgotten tribe': persons with disabilities in Ethiopia and the State's Response to COVID-19](#). (June, Addis Standard)

## Europe

**European Parliament** [in defence of rights of people with intellectual disabilities](#) and their families in times of Covid-19 emergency (July, Inclusion Europe). This follows a petition to [defend the rights of people with intellectual disabilities](#) and their families in times of COVID-19 emergency (June, Inclusion Europe)

**Fundamental Rights Implications** — bulletins from the Fundamental Rights Agency highlight the situation of persons with disabilities. See [Bulletin 4](#) (July). Bulletin 3 [focuses on older people](#) (June).

## France

Persons with disabilities, carers and professionals: facing COVID-19 together. (in French).

## Ghana

Ensuring a [disability-inclusive COVID-19 response in Ghana](#) (June, Sightsavers)

## India

[‘Ensure PwDs are not left behind’](#) (June, Morung Express). “There are instances of people with disabilities dying due to lack of access to food and medicine or healthcare while social distancing has taken away the crucial support that they were otherwise accessing”.

The coronavirus pandemic [has further marginalised people with disabilities, mental illness](#) (June, Gaon Connection)

[Disability Rights India, Where Do We Stand: 2020 Assessment](#) (May, She the People). Disability rights activists discuss impact of lockdown and other areas of rights.

Covid-19: [Extend help to women with disabilities](#) (May, Hindustan Times)

[Disabled Indians can’t be afterthought in Covid](#). (May, The Print)

[Tackling Coronavirus in India](#) (April, CBM)

## **Ireland**

[No going back to reduced rights for people with disabilities](#) (May, Irish Examiner)

## **Kenya**

People with disabilities during COVID-19: [A story from Kenya](#), (Arise)

[Impact Of COVID-19 On Kenyans With Disabilities](#) (April, Open Institute)

Covid-19 Response: [Inclusion of persons with disabilities as an afterthought](#) (April, Fredrick Ouko).

A self-help group's [response to COVID-19, pooling their savings](#). (video on LinkedIn, via Tom Palmer)

## **Latin America**

Key Measures to face the [impacts of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities: social policies in response to Coronavirus](#). (in Spanish, August). From **Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (IADB)**

[META and the importance of including persons with disabilities in COVID response strategies](#). (in Spanish, June, META)

[Disability, COVID, and policy in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). (In Spanish, Connecting D&I)

## **Lebanon**

Lebanon: [People with Disabilities Overlooked in Covid-19](#) (May, Human Rights Watch)

## **Malawi**

Feature on [COVID-19: Malawi Union of the Blind](#) and their response. (May, DRF)

## Mozambique

LFTW on [Food distribution in Mozambique](#) (short video, youtube)

## Nepal

**Humanity and Inclusion** Rapid Needs Assessment on [an inclusive response to COVID-19 in Nepal](#) (link to pdf, April)

## Somalia

A guidance brief on a [disability inclusive COVID-19 response in Somalia](#) (link to pdf, April), from **Humanity and Inclusion** and others.

## UK

["Slow, inconsistent and, at times, negligent"](#) summary of issues coming out of Parliamentary report on readying health and social care for the pandemic. (July, Doughty Street Chambers)

Webinar on [Ageism, ableism and the coronavirus](#) (July, ILC UK)

Disability-inclusive COVID-19 response: [What it is, why it is important and what we can learn from the United Kingdom's response](#) (Hannah Kuper et al, Wellcome Open Research)

[How the government breached disabled people's rights 17 times during the pandemic](#) (July, Disability News Service)

Seminar on [Implications of the COVID-19 Crisis for Disability Policy](#), (June, LSE)

## USA

[How to centre disability in the tech response to COVID-19](#). (July, Brookings)

Deadly Discrimination: [The Forgotten Impact Of Covid-19 On People With Disabilities](#) (July, Forbes)

[Americans with disabilities need more support during pandemic, say advocates](#) (news clip with transcript, June, PBS News Hour)

[Freedom for Some Is Not Freedom for All: COVID-19, Institutions, and Disability Rights](#). (June, Disability Visibility Blog)

[Centering the Disability and Aging Communities in Federal Emergency Response Efforts](#). (June, Center for American Progress)

[An Unequal Response: COVID-19 and Disability](#) (May, John Hopkins School of Public Health Expert Insights)

[Commentary on 'All Bodies': US perspective](#) (May, Pandemic Praxis)

## Vietnam

[Collaborating during Coronavirus](#) – Testimonies from Vietnam (May, CBM)

## Resources by disability

The **World Blind Union** report [Amplifying Voices: Our Lives Our Say](#), Learning from COVID-19 through the experiences of blind and partially sighted persons across the world.

**World Federation of the Deafblind** on June 27th: [A historic day to acknowledge the rights of persons with deafblindness](#).

COVID-19: [Albinism Umbrella \(AU\) and Organization for the Integration and Promotion of People with Albinism \(OIPPA\)](#) (Disability Rights Fund)

Webinar from **Portal da Deficiência Visual** (Portal of Visual Disability, all in Portuguese), a series of live discussions on visual disabilities: how to do [classes and services](#); how to make [accessible teaching material](#); on [directions and mobility](#); [diary of daily activities](#); [smart-phone accessibility](#); and [how to make a plan for IT studies](#).

In the **UK**, [D/deafness and solidarity in the covid-19 pandemic](#) (May, BMJ Opinion)

## Reflections and leaving no-one behind

From **Canada**,

- COVID-19, [its aftermath and disabled people: What is the connection to ethics?](#) (May, Wolbring)

From **India**,

- [Commentary on 'All Bodies': Indian perspective](#) (May, Satendra Singh, RHiME)
- Women With Disabilities [Have Been Excluded In Government Policy During The Covid Pandemic](#) (July, Behan Box)

From the **UK**,

- Covid-19 shows that the lives of [people with a learning disability are still not treated as equal](#) (September, The BMJ Opinion)
- Disability and COVID-19: [A deadly virus made worse by discrimination](#) (August, Yahoo! News)
- [The shielders turning the word 'vulnerable' on its head](#) (July, BBC)
- ["Vulnerable People"](#) and discussion of that label. (July, Breakthrough UK)

From the **USA**,

- [Crip Camp Is A Needed Reminder of Who The Fuck Disabled People Are](#) (April, Crutches and Spice)
- [We Have Been Disabled: How The Pandemic Has Proven The Social Model Of Disability](#) (April, Forbes)
- [Disability as an Axis of Inequality: A Pandemic Illustration](#) (May/June, Footnotes)

# Inclusion in protection and interim measures

## Communications and information

IDA and IDDC have an [Accessibility Campaign](#) “to call for public health information and communications around COVID19 to be fully accessible.” It calls on the United Nations [to take action on leading](#) this (May, IDA). See the [campaign page](#) for other advocacy materials including [an infographic](#) (link to pdf).

Statement on [Accessible Communication for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People](#) during COVID-19 Pandemic. In summary: transparent masks, information in text formats, use of speech-to-text apps, and a “positive attitude towards communication”. (August, World Federation of the Deaf)

Discussion on **inclusive risk communication**: [the neglect of people with disabilities in communication campaigns](#) (May, BMJ Opinion) and [four recommendations for inclusive risk communication](#) (June, Prevention Web). Both articles by Sapana Basnet Bista.

- What are the key considerations for including people with disabilities in COVID-19 [hygiene promotion programmes](#)? (August, Disability Evidence Portal)
- [Setting out Sightsavers’ approach to behaviour change](#) on behaviour change communication (July, Sightsavers)

In **Canada**, Pandemic [highlights existing barriers for those with communication disabilities](#) (May, The Star)

In the **Eastern Mediterranean Region**, an IOM guide on [How Can Risk Communication and Community Engagement \(RCCE\) include marginalized and vulnerable people?](#).

From the **UK**,

- [COVID-19 Beyond Words](#) a wordless story to help understand Coronavirus. Other stories include [good days and bad days during lockdown](#).

From the **USA**, The pandemic made life harder for deaf people. [The solutions could benefit everyone](#). (May, Technology Review)

In the **Sudan**, [Bridging the Gap launches an awareness-raising campaign](#) (Bridging the Gap)

## Sign-language

In the **UK**,

- Lack of sign language interpreters [leads to legal case against government](#) (April, BBC)

- The [impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Sign-Language interpreting working conditions](#) (June, Acadeafic)

In the USA,

- Judge Orders White House to [Include Sign Language in Covid Briefings](#) (September, Courthouse News Service)
- Judge orders [Andrew Cuomo to add sign-language interpreter to coronavirus briefings](#) (May, Democrat and Chronicle)

## Masks / face coverings

### Rules on wearing masks and exemptions

From the UK,

- [How the face mask exemptions have divided opinion – even between disabled people](#) (August, Disability Horizons)
- [Retail customers and face coverings / masks](#) (July, Business Disability Forum)
- [Lipreaders' companions given exemption on face coverings on public transport](#) (June, Limping Chicken)

From the USA,

- The [ADA and Face Mask Policies](#) (August, Southeast ADA Center)

### Showing that you have an exemption from wearing masks

See for example the UK Disability Horizons [lanyard and card](#).

### People attempting to misuse mask exemptions

In the USA:

- some [fraudulent claims of exemption were printed](#). (June, Department of Justice) Coverage [on Disability Scoop](#).
- The Hot New Far-Right Trend: [Claiming a Disability to Avoid Wearing a Mask](#) (May, The Daily Beast)

### Concerns about masks or harassment of those not wearing them

From the UK,

- Face mask: [Lip-reading sisters abused for lifting mask on train](#) (July, BBC)
- [Maskcast: "If I'm struggling, be kind"](#) podcast with transcript (July, BBC Ouch)
- ['Face masks could increase anxiety for people with disfigurements'](#) (June, the Guardian)
- Disabled [lawyer 'disgusted' after being harassed for not wearing face mask](#) (July, Daily Star)

## Communicating while wearing a mask

Useful twitter thread on [how to adapt to deaf people while wearing face masks](#). (June, @thatdeafgirlkj)

From the **UK**, I'm partially deaf. [When mask-wearing came along, I had to rebuild my world](#) (August, Guardian)

From the **USA**, [Being Deaf in the Pandemic Means Fighting for Your Right to Be Heard](#) (August, Cosmopolitan)

## Clear masks

Why more and more people around the world are [wearing masks with a transparent screen](#) (August, SBS News)

From **Belgium**, [transparent masks aid communication for hard of hearing](#) (UN).

In **France**, the "[masque inclusif](#)" (July, L'Usine Nouvelle).

In **India**, [Should we be shifting to transparent masks?](#) (July, The Hindu)

In **Kenya**, [Breaking down barriers, one mask at a time](#) (LFTW)

In **Uganda**, a group [using recycled plastic to make clear face-masks](#) (June, Social Innovation Academy)

In the **UK**,

- Government [delivers 250,000 clear face masks](#) to support people with hearing loss (September, Department of Health and Social Care)

From the **USA**,

- [Demand Surges For See-Through Face Masks As Pandemic Swells](#) (July, NPR)
- [World's First Transparent, FDA-Registered Mask](#) (June, Yanko Design)
- [Clear face masks become a lifeline for the deaf community](#) (May, 13 ABC)
- This [Designer is Making Masks for People With Disabilities](#) (June, Freethink)

## Physical distancing and isolation

In **Italy**, [Social distancing for the visually impaired in Italy](#) - photo story featuring different individuals (July, BBC)

In **Peru**, [what does quarantine mean for people with disabilities?](#) (May, IDS)

From the **UK**,

- Blind during lockdown: [I feel like I'm on a different planet](#) short video from the BBC (August)



- The impact of [social distancing for disabled people, who are just not disabled enough](#) (Everyday Society, June)
- [A phone call can't make tea](#): how UK's lack of social care is hitting disabled people in lockdown (June, Guardian)
- [Physical distancing makes life harder for blind people](#) – just ask my friend Dave (May, The Guardian)
- The [coronavirus conundrum when your mouth is your 'hand'](#) (May, BBC)

In the USA,

- When [Street Design Leaves Some People Behind](#) (August, Bloomberg City Lab)
- Boston initiative [seeks to improve accessibility at restaurants](#) (July, Boston Globe)
- COVID-19 and blindness: [why the new touchless, physically-distant world sucks for people with visual impairment](#) (June, Nicholas A. Giudice)

## Lockdown and confinement

### Lockdown makes the world more accessible for some

From the UK,

- My pandemic epiphany: [watching the world open up for disabled people](#) (August, Guardian)
- [Why coronavirus may make the world more accessible](#) (May, BBC)
- How disabled people are [problem-solving in the pandemic](#) (May, BBC)
- [I'm disabled and I don't want lockdown to end](#) (May, Metro)

From the USA, [When the World Shut Down, They Saw It Open](#) (August, New York Times)

## Institutions and long-term care facilities

For full information on Long-term Care responses to COVID-19 see [LTCcovid](#) a site from the International Long-term Care Policy Network.

Internationally,

- COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor (DRM) calls for [an emergency response to the catastrophic abuse of the human rights of persons with disabilities in institutions](#) (July)
- WHO policy brief on [preventing and managing COVID-19 across long-term care services](#) (July)

In Australia,

- Coronavirus fail: [no help for the aged from federal authorities](#), (August, The Australian)
- ['Looming' COVID-19 emergency in disability support homes](#) (August, The Age)
- Coronavirus outbreaks grow in [Victorian group homes for people living with disabilities](#) (August, ABC) Also [in the Guardian](#). (August)

## In Belgium,

- [When COVID-19 hit, many elderly were left to die](#) (August, New York Times).
- [Left behind in the times of COVID-19](#) (link to pdf, July, MSF). Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) sharing experiences from its intervention in care homes in Belgium.

## In Europe,

- [what measures have been taken to protect care homes during the COVID-19 Crisis?](#) (June, COVID-19 Health Systems Response Monitor). Featuring the range of measures taken, including some notable gaps: where countries did not gather data; lack of medical provision; timing of restricting outside visits; shortages in PPE; limited testing of residents and staff; limited financial assistance and remaining vulnerabilities.

## In Indonesia,

- the [Forgotten People](#): “The institutions of Indonesia where ‘lockdown’ takes on an even darker meaning”. (May, Mad in Asia Pacific)
- COVID-19: [Indonesian Mental Health Association \(IMHA\)](#) (May, DRF)

## In Serbia, [Covid-19 and the flaws of institutional care in Serbia](#) (June, Pescanik)

## In Sweden, [What's going wrong in Sweden's care homes?](#) (May, BBC)

## In the UK,

- Care home residents ['losing will to live' amid Covid restrictions in England](#) (August, the Guardian) Similarly, Covid rules ['leaving residents feeling abandoned'](#) (August, BBC)
- More than [25,000 patients discharged to care homes](#) in crucial 30 days before routine testing. (June, Independent). Patients were [discharged from hospitals into care homes](#) without knowing if they had coronavirus. (July, Guardian)
- Care homes in England [‘thrown to the wolves’ during pandemic](#) (July, Financial Times)
- Thousands may have died in care homes [after families were ‘blocked from discharging them’](#) (June, The Telegraph)
- Coronavirus: [Devon care homes were 'hit so quickly'](#) (June, BBC)
- the [results of lockdown on mental health](#) of care home residents (May, The Observer)

## In the USA,

- ‘They Just Dumped Him Like Trash’: [Nursing Homes Evict Vulnerable Residents](#) (June, New York Times)
- In Massachusetts, [“Free Our People!” Ex-Psychiatric Patients Demand COVID-19 Accountability in State-Run Facilities](#) (May, Mad in America)

## Future of care facilities and deinstitutionalization

## Internationally,

- Webinar on [Deinstitutionalization: before, during and after COVID-19](#) (Inclusion International).
- [Locked up long before the coronavirus lockdown](#) (May, The Hill)
- [International Perspectives on COVID-19 and the Future of Nursing Homes](#) (Balsillie School of International Affairs).

#### In Canada,

- [COVID-19 renews the struggle for anti-capitalist care models](#) (May, Canadian Dimension)

#### From Europe,

- Webinar on “[Safety through inclusion: The case for emergency deinstitutionalisation](#)” (June, from European Network on Independent Living and others).

From Ireland, [Nursing homes must be made a thing of the past](#) (May, The Irish Times).

#### From USA,

- It's [Time to Abolish Nursing Homes](#), (August, The Nation)
- [Amid Deadly Virus, Advocates Push for Nursing Home Alternatives](#) (June, Undark)
- [Shut Down the Death Traps](#) (June, The Progressive)
- [The COVID-19 Pandemic Makes it Clear: It's Time to Permanently Close Institutions](#) (May, Rooted in Rights)

## Coming out of lockdown

#### In the UK,

- Guidance for businesses on [back to business: supporting disabled employees post-lockdown](#) (Business Disability Forum)
- I'm a [shielder who's been out for the first time. How do I stay safe?](#) (August, Guardian)
- ['Heartless and reckless' to force shielding people back to work](#) says the Trade Union Congress (July, Guardian) [More on going back to work from BBC](#) (August)
- A fifth of disabled people [will not leave their homes until a vaccine is found](#) (July, the Independent)
- 58% of [disabled and chronically ill people feel anxious about the easing of lockdown rules](#) Survey results. (July, Disability Horizons)
- People with [learning disabilities 'at risk of falling through cracks'](#) (July, BBC)
- [Lockdown Might Be Easing But Not For Disabled People Like Me](#) (June, Huffington Post)
- Chronic illness has made me a [self isolation expert: here's how to ease yourself out of lockdown](#) (June, The Guardian)
- Experts decry easing of coronavirus lockdown for England's shielders (May, The Guardian)

#### In the USA,

- Is Your [Local Government Including People with Disabilities in Developing and Implementing Reopening Plans?](#) (July, World Institute on Disability)

## Social protection and services

CIP are doing a [vital summary of worldwide responses](#) to social protection for persons with disabilities. This collection from May highlights responses from 55 countries which made explicit relief for persons with disabilities. Key measures have been cash-transfers, in-kind supports, and adapting delivery mechanisms to pandemic conditions.

COVID-19 **Disability Rights Monitor** calls on governments to [ensure access to food, medication and essential supplies](#) for persons with disabilities (September)

Webinar on inclusion of persons with disabilities in [social protection for COVID-19 recovery and beyond](#) (September, SocialProtection.org) Twitter thread with [key points from webinar](#) (Valentina Barca).

[Gender and Inclusion in social protection responses during COVID-19](#) (May, Expert Advice Helpline, DFID, GIZ). Includes discussion of persons with disabilities.

Blog on [economic recovery begins with children \(and older people, and people with disabilities\)](#): The urge for universal lifecycle cash transfers as a response to COVID-19. (May, SocialProtection.org)

## Responses by country

In **Canada**, [Financial future grim for Canadians with disabilities, health conditions](#) (August, The Chronicle Herald)

In **Kenya**, National Council for Persons with Disabilities messaging on on [COVID-19 Cash Transfers for Persons with Disabilities](#) (link to pdf, May, NCPWD)

In the **UK**, [disabled people denied emergency Covid support](#) (June, Disability Benefits Consortium)

In the **USA**,

- [To get federal benefits for disabilities that prevent them from filling out paperwork, they have to fill out paperwork — so they are suing.](#) (May, Washington Post)

## Health, treatment and recovery

[Disability ethics in the coronavirus crisis](#), (Satendra Singh, Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care)

Essay on [Disability Rights as a Necessary Framework for Crisis Standards of Care and the Future of Health Care](#) (June, Hastings Center Report)

[Meeting the health needs of persons with disabilities during COVID-19](#) (June, World Bank)

## Treatment and testing: priority and availability

From **Chile**, [persons with disabilities are last on the list for the ventilator](#) (in Spanish, June, Publímetro).

In **New Zealand**, [COVID-19 tracing app 'unusable' for blind and those with low vision](#) (May, News Hub)

In **Romania**, [Urgent Appeal Requesting Access to COVID-19 Medical Treatment](#) (April, ENIL)

In **Spain**, complaints that the [track-and-trace application is not accessible for some persons with disabilities](#) (in Spanish, August, CERMI)

In **South Africa**,

- COVID-19, disability and the [context of healthcare triage in South Africa](#): Notes in a time of pandemic (September, DocWire News)
- [Deciding whose lives really matter in a pandemic](#) (May, Mail and Guardian)

From the **UK**,

- staff members in care homes [changed do-not-resuscitate plans without discussion](#). (August, The Telegraph)
- Sick children having to [reuse ventilator parts due to shortage caused by COVID-19](#) (July, Sky News)
- Coronavirus tests ['denied' to people with learning disabilities living in care homes](#). (May, Metro)

From the **USA**,

- [One Man's COVID-19 Death Raises The Worst Fears Of Many People With Disabilities](#) (July, NPR) Also on [Yahoo News](#).
- [Who Gets Lifesaving Care? Tennessee Changes Rules After Federal Complaint](#) (June, New York Times) See also on [Disability Scoop](#).
- ['This Is Really Life or Death.'](#) For People With Disabilities, Coronavirus Is Making It Harder Than Ever to Receive Care (April, Time)
- [Hospital Visitor Bans Under Scrutiny](#) After Disability Groups Raise Concerns Over Care (May, NPR)

## Health inequalities

In **Latin America**, a webinar on access to [health and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 emergency](#) (in Spanish with International and Venezuelan Sign Languages, June, RIADIS)

From the **UK**, [What does coronavirus tell us about health inequalities - and what needs to be done?](#) (May, Center for Ageing Better)

## Recovery and long-term health effects of COVID-19

[Long-Haulers Are Redefining COVID-19](#): exploration of the physical and psychological affects of the disease and the way societies are dealing with it. “No matter the exact diagnosis, the COVID-19 pandemic will almost certainly create a substantial wave of chronically disabled people.” (August, The Atlantic)

[Survivors of Covid-19 show increased rate of psychiatric disorders](#), study finds. (August, The Guardian)

[Survivorship after COVID-19 ICU stay](#) (July, Nature Reviews Disease Primers): “many critically ill patients with COVID-19 will face long-lasting physical, cognitive and/or mental health impairments.”

## Vaccine and Treatment Development

From the USA, [Older Adults May Be Left Out of Some Covid-19 Trials](#) (June, New York Times).

## Inclusion in Medicine

Doctors with disabilities call for a [paradigm shift to make medical education, profession more inclusive](#) (August, News Medical Life Sciences)

In the UK,

- Isle of Wight [hospital emergency staff learn sign language](#) to communicate with a colleague. (BBC, July)
- The communication needs of [D/deaf healthcare workers and patients are being forgotten](#) (May, BMJ Opinion)

In the USA,

- [Disabled Nurses Find Covid-19 Silver Lining; Hope For More Inclusive Future](#) (July, Forbes)

# Across society and sectors

## Care

[How the pandemic impacts caregivers](#) in mental health and other areas (May, Medical News Today)  
From the **UK**,

- [How to keep safe if you use carers and PAs](#) (Disability Horizons)

## Culture and sport

### Art and performances

[Performance-in-Place: An Evening with Kinetic Light](#) - online performance by Kinetic Light, a disability arts and dance ensemble. (May, The 8th Floor)

[The Future is Loading](#) (Shape in the UK). “For people who are marginalised in the present day, facing discrimination and barriers to access, imagining the future can be an act of radical defiance.”

Coronavirus: [The pictures that create more empathy than words](#) (August, BBC). Persons with “invisible disabilities” drawing their experiences of lockdown.

[Feeling the body in quarantine](#), #TambiénEsCuidar (in Spanish, June, META)

### Commentary

[Online Art Viewing Is Finally Being Embraced—But Does That Make It More Accessible?](#) (June, Observer)

In the **UK**, [Disability campaigners warn of UK's progress unravelling in the arts](#) (June, the Guardian). Using the hashtag [#WeShallNotBeRemoved](#) (Twitter).

In the **USA**,

- Wheelchair dance team founder [says practicing online keeps group connected during the pandemic: 'We adapt'](#) (June, Yahoo)
- ['Disgusting discrimination': Dylan Alcott blasts US Open over omission](#) (June, the Guardian)

## Digital accessibility and inclusion

[How accessible technology can help in our rapidly changing world](#) (May, Atos)

In **Chile**, the importance of [web accessibility for the quality of life of persons with disabilities](#) (in Spanish, May, LinkedIn)

From the **UK**,

- It's Time To [Escalate The Naming And Shaming Of Inaccessible Websites](#) (September, Forbes)
- [Accessibility Helps All Users, Not Just The Disabled](#), (August, Forbes)

From **USA**,

- resources and guide on [Digital Accessibility and Other Best Practices for Remote Work](#) (Disability:In)
- [Telework and Accessibility](#) resources from PEAT.
- Zoom [fatigue is something the deaf community knows very well](#) (May, Quartz)

## Education and young people

From **UNICEF**, Ensuring an [inclusive return to school for children with disabilities](#) (link to pdf, June)

From the **World Bank**,

- a webinar on [Pivoting to Inclusion](#): “leveraging lessons from the COVID-19 crisis for learners with disabilities”. (July)
- short advisory video [Jozi Practices Safety at School during COVID-19](#) (July)

Comments and links from **UNESCO** on [Including learners with disabilities in COVID-19 education responses](#) (June)

**Education above all** has made an [Activity Bank for Disabilities](#), “an activity bank for children that require additional and specialized care, in order to support their continued development and learning.”

An inclusive response to COVID-19: [Education for children with disabilities](#) (May, Global Partnership for Education)

[How education has been affected by coronavirus](#) (June, Leonard Cheshire)

‘Education for All’ under Lockdown: [the path ahead for inclusion of children with disabilities](#) (June, Cambridge Network for Disability and Education Research)

Opinion: [How to reach children with disabilities during school closures](#) (July, Devex)

In **Brazil**, lack of support to persons with disabilities [overwhelms parents in the pandemic](#) (in Portuguese, August, Folha)

In **Europe**, [lack of education for children with intellectual disabilities made worse in the Coronavirus emergency](#) (May, Inclusion Europe) Brief with situation analysis and recommendations.



In **Ghana**, how [COVID-19 Affects Education For People With Disabilities In Ghana](#) (July, Disability News Africa)

In **India**,

- 4.3 million students with disabilities [may drop out, unable to cope with e-education](#) (July, Times of India)
- India's [online classrooms are outdated for disabled kids](#). "Covid just made it worse." (July, ThePrint)
- Many students with disabilities [struggling with e-education, NGOs call for more accessible approach](#) (June, Outlook)

In **Indonesia**,

- Webinar on [rights of children with disabilities during the pandemic](#) (Bahasa with sign-language, August, Disability Rights Fund and others)
- Covid-19 New Normal? [What does it mean for Inclusive Education and what government must do to support students with disabilities](#) (June, AIDRAN)

In **Kenya**, COVID-19 and [education for children with disabilities](#) (Youtube, July, Action Foundation Kenya)

In **Moldova**, [supporting children with special needs](#) (July, GPE)

In **North Macedonia**, [Inclusive Education, Learning & Distance Learning in North Macedonia](#) - Analysis Post COVID-19 (June, UNDP).

In **Sri Lanka**, [Connect and adapt to learn and live: Deaf education in Sri Lanka](#) (May, Cambridge Network for Disability and Education Research)

In the **UK**,

- [Pupils with special needs 'forgotten' as English schools reopen](#). "20,000 children with special needs unlikely to return to school because of safety concerns" (September, Guardian)
- [Fighting for an Education](#), (video, September, feature from BBC Panorama)
- 'Brink of collapse': [parents of disabled children buckling under 24-hour care](#) (May, Guardian)

In **USA**,

- Schools Say They [Have To Do Better For Students With Disabilities This Fall](#) (August, NPR)
- Here's How [Texas' Schools For The Deaf And Blind Stay Connected](#) To Students During The Pandemic (May, Kera News)
- Activists [Fight to Advance Success for Students With Disabilities](#) During COVID-19 Crisis (July, Newswire)
- [Mothering while Deaf in a Newly Quiet World](#) (May, New York Times)

## Higher Education

[Let COVID-19 expand awareness of disability tech](#) (May, Nature)

From the **Netherlands**, [Will Students and Staff with Disabilities Disappear in the \(Social\) Distance?](#) (May, Leiden Inclusion Blog)

From the **UK**,

- a series of posts on higher-education and disability from the Everyday Society, a sociology blog. On [self-isolation](#). On [inequality and interdependence](#). On the [Academy](#): “it is no shock that universities were unprepared for the problems of illness and disablement that they routinely disavow”. And more on [Disability, Sociology and the Academy](#). (May)
- Would it be a [bad thing if Covid-19 put an end to the traditional academic conference?](#) (May, Disability Inclusive Science Careers)

In the **USA**,

- Arizona State University [experts, students on how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting members of the disabled community](#) (June, ASU)

## Elections and politics

In the **USA**,

- [What it’s like to vote with a disability during a pandemic](#) (September, New York Times)
- Blind Michigan Supreme Court Justice [turned away by clerk’s office while trying to get absentee ballot](#) (June, Click on Detroit)
- [Blind voters fear loss of privacy with shift to mail voting](#) (June, ABC News)

## Humanitarian and Refugees

The **Global Humanitarian Response Plan** on [COVID-19, April-December 2020](#) (July) highlights the impact on persons with disabilities.

- “[My ears are my eyes](#)” is a blog from UNOCHA that describes experiences of persons with disabilities and actions to be taken.
- The **Humanitarian Response Plan** [update from May 20th](#) features persons with disabilities. (link to pdf)

The **Inter-Agency Standing Committee** developed guidance on [how to apply in COVID-19 response](#) its excellent guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities (link to pdf, June) **CBM** has guidance on [persons with disabilities and COVID-19](#) in its practical guidance on inclusive humanitarian fieldwork.

**Humanity and Inclusion** on COVID-19 in humanitarian contexts: [no excuses to leave persons with disabilities behind!](#) (link to pdf, June) See also a webinar exploring HI's [humanitarian response in inclusive education](#). (July)

**MSF** tools and resources for [inclusion of persons with disabilities](#) in the COVID-19 emergency.

For World Refugee Day 2020:

- IDA/IDDC [statement on refugees and COVID-19](#) (June, IDDC)
- [Advocating for the needs of persons with disabilities](#) (June, Global Compact on Refugees)

In **Uganda**, a protection analysis on [impact of COVID-19 on Persons with Special Needs in refugee communities](#). (May, IFRC)

## International cooperation

The **Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** gave a report on the role of [international cooperation to support the rights of persons with disabilities](#). (July) It highlights various dimensions made more in response to COVID-19 and among its conclusions says that “Unless international aid to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities is increased, the international pledge to leave no one behind, in particular in a post-COVID-19 scenario, is at risk.”.

“We are calling on the United Nations and national governments to take urgent action on disability rights, which are being dangerously undermined during the COVID-19 health crisis.” — [COVID-19 disability rights campaign, launched by Sightsavers](#) in May.

**ADD International** work around the world: [Covid-19: Update](#) (July)

**CBM Global** and their COVID-19 Response: [Stop the Spread of Inequality](#).

**Humanity and Inclusion** on inclusive governance: [a first guiding note](#) and a second guidance note [on the “aftermath” of the pandemic](#)”.

**Inclusive Futures**, a newly-launched platform, features their [initiatives on COVID-19](#).

**Light for the World** on [Responding to the unprecedented](#).

## Justice

In the **USA**, [Online Dispute Resolution Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities: We Must Do Better](#) (June, Online Dispute Resolution: Theory and Practice)

## Mental Health

The **UN Secretary General** policy brief on [COVID-19 and the Need for Action on Mental Health](#) (May).

**Conversations with health care workers from around the world** (May and June, Mental Health Network). On [supporting staff mental health](#). On [innovations in remote support](#). On [continuing mental health services](#).

Webinar from **UN** leadership on Coping with COVID: [Young People Living the New Normal](#). See also [International sign language](#) for the event. (July)

A [webinar series](#) from the **Mental Health Innovation Network** (MHIN).

[Roadmap to strengthen global mental health systems](#) to tackle the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (July, International Journal of Mental Health Systems)

Keeping mental health at [the forefront of development, during Covid-19 and beyond](#) (July, bond)

From the **Inter-Agency Steering Committee**, Guidance on [Basic Psychosocial Skills- A Guide for COVID-19 Responders](#)

From the **International Labour Organization**, [managing work-related psychosocial risks during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) (June)

From **UNHCR**, Emerging Practices: [mental health and psychosocial support in refugee operations during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

It Is Becoming [Much Harder to Access Mental Health Support Anonymously](#) (Slate, May)

In **Australia**, The COVID-19 pandemic and the [human rights of persons with mental and cognitive impairments subject to coercive powers](#) (June, International Journal of Law and Psychiatry)

In **Canada**,

- Mental health [impact of coronavirus pandemic hits marginalized groups hardest](#) (July, The Conversation) Persons with disabilities were more likely to report deterioration of mental health than persons without disabilities.
- [Is it really a 'mental health day' if you're WFH?](#) (June, the Province)

In **Europe**, position paper [on mental health in the aftermath of COVID-19](#) (Mental Health Europe)

From the **Middle East**, [Covid-19 Puts New Focus on Arab Youths' Mental Health Needs](#) (June, Al-Fanar Media)

From the **UK**,

- [The COVID-19 pandemic, financial inequality and mental health](#) (May, Mental Health Foundation).

- [The social underpinnings of mental distress in the time of COVID-19](#) – time for urgent action. “Mental health is best ensured by urgently rebuilding the social and economic supports stripped away over the last decade.” (open letter to Wellcome Open Research)

From the USA, How to [Monitor and Support Employee Mental Health](#) (Business.com)

## Transportation and travel

In the UK,

- Streetscapes: [how do we ensure the 'new normal' works for disabled people?](#) (July)
- 95% of disabled people who responded to a survey [won't travel abroad until there is a vaccine for Covid-19](#) or we know more about it (July, Disability Horizons)
- The new [way to travel if you're disabled and use access](#) (June, BBC Ouch)
- [More cycling and walking is good – as long as streets are accessible.](#) (May, RNIB)

In the USA, [COVID-19's transportation implications for people with disabilities](#) (June, The Hill)

## Violence

**COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor (DRM)** calls for an [end to police violence and abuse against persons with disabilities and their family members](#): “alarm about increasing police violence against persons with disabilities in the context of the pandemic”. (August, DRM)

Women with disabilities at [higher risk of domestic and sexual violence with Covid-19](#), (Humanity and Inclusion)

In **Brazil**, [Women with Disability Have more difficulty to denounce domestic violence during the pandemic](#) (in Portuguese, July, Globo)

In **Mexico**, [Better to Make Yourself Invisible](#), on family violence against people with disability. (June, Human Rights Watch)

In **Nigeria**, [‘They pulled us down and started hitting us with a baton’](#) (Sightsavers)

In the USA,

- [Disability Rights Activists Take On Twin Pandemics of Racist Police Brutality & COVID-19](#) (July, Democracy Now)
- People with disabilities [protest police violence, COVID-19 discrimination](#) (July, USA Today)

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

See a guidance note from **CBM Australia** on [Disability Inclusion and COVID-19: Guidance for WASH delivery](#). (link to pdf, Jun)

## Work and skills

From the **International Labor Organization**,

- See the introduction for comments on the [COVID-19 and the World of Work](#) brief on ensuring inclusion for persons with disabilities at all stages of the response. It's also [available in Spanish](#). (June)
- Disability inclusion in company responses to COVID-19: [Results of a survey among National Business and Disability Networks and their members](#) (July)
- a brief on [ensuring no one is left behind in the response and recovery in the world of work](#). (June)
- [Webinar on COVID-19 and the World of Work](#): Implications for people with disabilities (June) A disability-inclusive response to [COVID-19 is a better response for all](#) - highlights of experts' comments. (short video, August)
- Masterclass webinar on [Making Remote Working Work](#) (June)
- Webinar on [business leadership in disability-inclusive responses to COVID-19](#) (June)
- If a ['new normal' is to be a better normal it must include persons with disabilities](#) (June, ILO Blog). Personal reflections and policy from an ILO colleague reflecting on disability in Switzerland, Ethiopia, and the international response.
- People with disabilities are [solution providers and co-creators during crises](#) (short video, May)

From the **international** Innovation to Inclusion Project, [webinar on COVID-19, women with disabilities and employment](#) (May)

In **Australia**, see the [COVID-19 Response Series](#) from Australian Network on Disability.

In **Brazil**, What the [experience of Covid-19 tells us about disability, work, and accessibility](#) (August, Somatosphere)

In **Kenya**, the [third Kenya Business and Disability Network meeting](#). (June)

In **Latin America**, Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) on [Decent work for people with disabilities pushed amidst COVID-19](#).

In **South Africa**, webinar on [learning for Disability when navigating the COVID-19 world](#) (April, BradshawLeRoux)

In **Uganda**, persons with disabilities [banking on new law to guarantee employment](#) (September, New Vision)

In the **UK**,

- [How to build back an inclusive charity workspace post lockdown](#) (July, Civil Society)
- [Inclusion on hold: 'Business as usual' disability policy must continue during COVID-19](#) (June, Business Disability Forum)
- [Business as \(un\)usual: How employers have supported their workforces during the Covid-19 outbreak and lockdown](#) (link to pdf, May, Business Disability Forum). See also a case study of how [this was done by RBS Bank](#) (link to pdf, Business and Disability Forum)

- Why [placing people in groups based on risk goes against inclusivity](#) (June, Personnel Today)
- See more from Business and Disability Forum, including the webinars, in their [COVID-19 resources](#).
- Anticipating the changes to the [Labour Market Status of Disabled People](#) (May, Disability Rights UK)

In the USA,

- [Collection of resources and best practices](#) from **Disability:IN**. Includes, among several other areas, resources that are [industry-specific](#), on [digital accessibility and remote work](#), and [mental health](#).
- [How COVID-19 improved accessibility for job seekers with disabilities](#) (July, HR Drive)

Company Responses

- [SAP's Disability-Inclusive COVID Response](#).

# Rebuilding / what happens next

IDA and IDDC Campaign on [rebuilding an inclusive future for all](#). (July):

## New perspectives and recovery

Ensuring an equitable recovery: [Disability inclusion in post-disaster planning](#) (July, World Bank Blogs)

Budget advocacy [is needed for a chance of an inclusive new normal](#) (May, Center for Inclusive Policy)

[Defining the New Normal for People With Disabilities and Older Persons in Cities](#) (June, Victor Santiago Pineda)

From **Bangladesh**, [What Covid-19 has taught us about disability](#) (June, Dhaka Tribune)

In **Canada**, [Strengthening Canada's disability community in a post-pandemic world](#), (September, The Star)

From **India**,

- Post-COVID-19 world [needs more inclusive designs for persons with disabilities](#) (September, Down to Earth)
- [A new era of accessibility](#): on persons with disabilities in the post-COVID world (June, The Hindu)

## Social protection

In the **UK**, [together we can](#) (June, SCIE) discusses ways to reframe social care:

Messages must avoid the 'othering' that comes from describing social care as 'looking after the most vulnerable people in our society' and instead reaffirm togetherness. We can shift how people think and feel about care and support if we situate its role within a wider web of reciprocal, everyday relationships. So we should begin our messaging with affirmative, values based statements like those being promoted by Cares Family on billboards across Manchester that say: 'Because we need kindness. Because we need connection. Because we need community. Because we need each other.'

## Work and employment

How to use the surge in [teleworking as a real chance to include people with disabilities](#) (August, Eurofound)

How the lessons of lockdown [will help disabled people at work](#) (May, Financial Times)



**In Australia,**

- Australians with disability say [working from home should be possible after the pandemic](#) (August, SBS News)
- This pandemic is [an opportunity to learn from the disability community](#). We are experts in resilience (July, The Guardian)

From **Kenya**, [Put disabled at centre of Building Back Better initiatives](#) (August, Nation)

In **Norway**, [Could a more flexible workday mean a more diverse workplace?](#) (June, Telenor)

**In the UK,**

- [Home working for disabled people 'must continue'](#) after lockdown (September, BBC)
- [Re-imagining the workplace post-pandemic at our Partner Breakfast](#) (August, Business Disability Forum)
- Webinar on “the new long life” – [A framework for flourishing in a changing world](#) (August, ILC UK)
- A paper on [COVID Post-Lockdown: Perspectives, Implications and Strategies for Disabled Staff](#) from staff networks of disabled people (May, NADSN).

**In the USA,**

- The [ADA, Telework, and the Post-Pandemic Workplace](#) (September, Regulatory Review)
- What the [disability rights movement and universal design can teach us about business and life in the age of COVID-19](#) (July, Grand Rapids Business Journal)
- COVID-19 is [reshaping the future of work for people with disabilities](#) (April, Shane Kamady)

# Going forward

## Surveys

[C4All COVID-19 Inclusive & Accessible Cities Short Survey](#) from **World Enabled** and the World Bank, “gathers insights on local responses to the COVID-19 outbreak and their impact on the lives of persons with disabilities and older persons”.

Survey from **RIADIS** in Latin America on the [situation of persons with disabilities who are refugees, displaced, or migrants](#). (In Spanish)

## Opportunities

Opening for [Executive Director](#) at the **World Federation of the Deaf**. Deadline 4 October.

A fellowship in Asia-Pacific for **IDA**, on Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Response. More on the [IDA site](#)

Global call from **WHO** for [measuring access to assistive technology using the WHO rapid Assistive Technology Assessment \(rATA\)](#). Deadline 4 October.

Call for proposals from **UNHCR** on [Digital Access, Inclusion and Participation](#).

Call for evidence from **Global Disability Innovation Hub** on [Powering Inclusion: AI and Assistive Technology](#). Deadline 8 October.

Call for [chapter proposals](#) from **Palgrave Handbook of Communication and Disability**. Deadline November 30.

Call for papers from **Journal for Enabling Technologies** on [Value and Potential of Enabling Technologies for People with Disabilities During Covid-19](#): Debates, opportunities, and challenges during and after a pandemic. Deadline: 5 December.

## Upcoming

6 October:

- Disability Inclusion in [Economic Empowerment Strategies](#) from the **GBDN**. 11:00 AM in Paris.

7 October:

- Disability Counts! [Disability Inclusive Data & Monitoring](#) from **Dutch Coalition on Disability and Development**. 15h-17h, GMT+1.
- [BSL eye-opener tour](#): gods and goddesses of Roman Britain from **British Museum**. 14.30–15.30 GMT+1

9 October:

- Join the world's first 24 hour [virtual March for Mental Health](#) from **Speak Your Mind Campaign**

22 October:

- [COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor](#) Final report Launch, 15.00-17.00 CEST

29 October:

- [Disability Studies and Architectural History](#), 2:00–3:30 PM Central

2 December:

- Early bird Celebration to [kickstart this year's International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) from **IDA**. 10am to 12pm (EST) / 4pm to 6pm (CET)