



# DEFINING DISABILITY, THE UN CRPD AND THE 2030 AGENDA

## What is disability?

The UN CRPD (2006) adopts a social model of disability and describes disability as including those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. The UN CRPD (UN, 2006) does not define disability. Rather, it attempts to explain disability by outlining some of the long-term impairments that some people may have, which in interaction with various barriers may pose a hindrance to their full and effective participation resulting in a disability. The distinguishing feature in the UN CRPD explanation of disability is the use of the phrase 'long term' to describe the nature of the impairment.

Disability is diverse and might affect one or more of the following aspects of a person:

- Vision
- Movement
- Mental capability: thinking, remembering, learning
- Communicating, speech
- Hearing
- Mental health
- Skin
- Social relationships.

The Persons with Disabilities (rights and privileges) Act No 9 of 2006 of Zanzibar defines disability as: *a state of restricted participation that results from the interaction between persons of impairments, conditions, health needs or similar situations, and environmental, social and attitudinal barriers, where the impairments, conditions, health needs or similar situations may be permanent, temporary, intermittent or imputed, and include those that are inter alia, physical, sensory, cognitive, psychosocial, neurological, medical or intellectual or a combination of those.*

## Types of disabilities

Disability covers a wide range of conditions: for example: a child born with albinism; a soldier who loses his sight as a result of a gunshot; a young woman with chronic depression; or an older man with an intellectual disability. Disability can be visible or invisible; static, episodic, or degenerating; painful or inconsequential.

Disability can be congenital – a disability that a person is born with such as hydrocephalus, cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, a club foot, or bowed legs, extra fingers or toes, or syndactyly of toes or fingers (webbed), cleft lip or palate, spina bifida, deafblindness, or leg length discrepancy. It can also be acquired – a disability that is acquired for example as a result of a sickness, or injury, or drug and alcohol abuse. This category includes poliomyelitis, paralysis (paraplegia, quadriplegia, hemiplegia), TB spine, leg length discrepancy as a result of a fracture or break to the bone, or a psychosocial disability such as bipolar disorder.

## Types of disabilities in Zanzibar

The *Umoja wa Watu Wenye Ulemavu* (2010), divided disabilities into the following categories:

- Physical disability
- Visual impairment
- Mental disability / disorder
- Albinism
- Hearing impairment
- Multiple disability

## The UN CRPD

In 2006, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) was adopted after a process of development that involved persons with disabilities and other stakeholders from all regions of the world. The UN CRPD is recognised as the most important international document relating to people with disabilities. It represented a catalyst in that it created a shift from looking at persons with disabilities as objects of charity, to seeing them as people who had equal rights in all areas of life.

The UN CRPD offers protection for the civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights of persons with disabilities on the basis of inclusion, equality and non-discrimination. It makes clear that persons with disabilities are entitled to live independently in their communities, to make their own choices and to play an active role in society.

**Article 1** of the UN CRPD describes its purpose as follows:

*The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.*

*Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.*

The general principles of the UN CRPD are outlined in Article 3. The principles are listed as:

- a. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
- b. Non-discrimination;
- c. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- d. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- e. Equality of opportunity;
- f. Accessibility;
- g. Equality between men and women;
- h. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

## Articles of the UN CRPD

The UN CRPD has 50 articles covering a broad range of areas and you are encouraged to read the UN CRPD in full. Articles include:

- Article 4 – General obligations
- Article 5 – Equality and non-discrimination
- Article 6 – Women with disabilities
- Article 7 – Children with disabilities
- Article 8 – Awareness-raising
- Article 9 – Accessibility
- Article 10 – Right to life
- Article 11 – Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies
- Article 16 – Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse
- Article 17 – Protecting the integrity of the person
- Article 18 – Liberty of movement and nationality
- Article 19 – Living independently and being included in the community
- Article 20 – Personal mobility
- Article 21 – Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information
- Article 24 – Education
- Article 25 – Health
- Article 26 – Habilitation and rehabilitation
- Article 27 – Work and employment
- Article 28 – Adequate standard of living and social protection
- Article 29 – Participation in political and public life
- Article 30 – Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport
- Article 31 – Statistics and data collection
- Article 33 – National implementation and monitoring

## A Rights Based Approach

The UN CRPD promotes the view that people are disabled by different barriers in society, rather than by their impairment or difference, because society is not organised to consider their needs. Such barriers might be physical, or they can be caused by people's attitudes or rules. The impact of a person's impairment is acknowledged, but disability is seen as being created by society's failure to accommodate persons with disabilities.

When we look at disability from the perspective of the UN CRPD – which puts the responsibility of disability onto society rather than with the individual person, we look at people with disabilities as people who have rights – rather than as people who are problems or who don't 'fit'.

This change in perspective marks a major shift, and helps us to look at all aspects of life from the perspective of promoting disability inclusive development – advocating for, and finding solutions to the inclusion of people with **all** types of disabilities in **all** aspects of life. This is a human rights based approach.

Governments as duty bearers have the primary and legal responsibility for making sure that the human rights of **all** its citizens are promoted and protected.

A human rights based approach to disability seeks to ensure that every person has an equal right to freedom, dignity, non-discrimination and protection from abuse of those rights, as well as access to their economic, cultural and social rights.

## The 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was launched in 2015 and is aimed at ending poverty in all its forms. The 2030 Agenda aspires to “a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination”.

The 2030 Agenda looks at Sustainable Development in five areas: People, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership, and Planet.



It includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is grounded in international human rights treaties including the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities. The aim of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals is to realise the *human rights of all*, and ensure that *no-one is left behind*.



**The following information on the 2030 Agenda is taken from the United Nations website <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>**

**Preamble** This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan. We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets which we are announcing today demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal Agenda. They seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve. They seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.

The Goals and targets will stimulate action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet:

**People** We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

**Planet** We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

**Prosperity** We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

**Peace** We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

**Partnership** We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focussed in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.

The interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals are of crucial importance in ensuring that the purpose of the new Agenda is realised. If we realize our ambitions across the full extent of the Agenda, the lives of all will be profoundly improved and our world will be transformed for the better.

## Links between the UN CRPD and the SDGs

By raising awareness of the links between the SDGs and the articles of the UN CRPD, we can see, and make the argument, that realising the articles of the UN CRPD will contribute towards the achievement of the SDGs.

Many of the Articles of the UN CRPD are very broad, such as:

- Article 4 – General obligations
- Article 5 – Equality and non-discrimination
- Article 6 – Women with disabilities
- Article 7 – Children with disabilities
- Article 9 – Accessibility
- Article 10 – Right to life
- Article 12 – Equal recognition before the law
- Article 31 – Statistics and data collection
- Article 32 – International cooperation
- Article 33 – National implementation and monitoring

These articles are relevant to all of the SDGs, for example to end poverty, women and children with disabilities must be considered, statistics and data collection will be essential, as well as international cooperation and national implementation and monitoring. However, some Articles of the UN CRPD are more closely linked with a particular SDG or SDGs.

Below, each of the 17 SDGs are listed in turn, followed by a list of the Articles of the UN CRPD that are most closely linked with them, to show how much the UN CRPD and SDGs have in common.



Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

4.1. The full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability.

10. Every human being has the inherent right to life and shall take all necessary measures to ensure its effective enjoyment by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

11. The protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters.

28.1. The right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, without discrimination on the basis of disability.

28.2.b. To ensure access by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes.

28.2.c. To ensure access by persons with disabilities and their families living in situations of poverty to assistance from the State with disability-related expenses, including adequate training, counselling, financial assistance and respite care.



Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

28.1. The right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, without discrimination on the basis of disability.



Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

10. Every human being has the inherent right to life and shall take all necessary measures to ensure its effective enjoyment by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

11. States Parties shall take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.

23.1. States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships, on an equal basis with others.

25. The right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure access for persons with disabilities to health services that are gender-sensitive, including health-related rehabilitation.

25.a. Provide persons with disabilities with the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care and programmes as provided to other persons, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and population-based public health programmes.

25.b. Provide those health services needed by persons with disabilities specifically because of their disabilities, including early identification and intervention as appropriate, and services designed to minimize and prevent further disabilities, including among children and older persons.

25.d. Require health professionals to provide care of the same quality to persons with disabilities as to others, including on the basis of free and informed consent by, inter alia, raising awareness of the human rights, dignity, autonomy and needs of persons with disabilities through training and the promulgation of ethical standards for public and private health care.



Some of the relevant UN CRPD articles:

4.1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and life long learning directed to:

24.1.a. The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity.

24.1.b. The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential.

24.2.a. persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability.

24.2.b. persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live.

24.2.c. Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided.

24.2.d. persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education.

24.4. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

24.5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others.

**5 GENDER EQUALITY**



**ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS.**

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

16.1. all appropriate measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects.

16.2. To prevent all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse by ensuring, assistance and support for persons with disabilities and their families and caregivers, including through the provision of information and education on how to avoid, recognize and report instances of exploitation, violence and abuse.

23.1 To take effective and appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships, on an equal basis with others.

25.a. Provide persons with disabilities with the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care and programmes as provided to other persons, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and population-based public health programmes.

28.2 b To ensure access by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes.

**6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION**



**ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL.**

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

28.2.a. To ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to clean water services, and to ensure access to appropriate and affordable services, devices and other assistance for disability-related needs.

**7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY**



**ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL**

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

28.1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right without discrimination on the basis of disability.

32.1.d. Providing, as appropriate, technical and economic assistance, including by facilitating access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies, and through the transfer of technologies.

**8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**



**PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL.**

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

24.5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

27.1 The right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment.

**9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**



**BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION**

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

9.1. To ensure persons with disabilities have access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.

**10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES**



**REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES**

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

16.1 States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects.

28.2. The right of persons with disabilities to social protection and to the enjoyment of that right without discrimination on the basis of disability

28.2.b. To ensure access by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes.



Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

9.1. To ensure persons with disabilities have access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.

9.2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures to:

9.2.a. Develop, promulgate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public.

9.2.b. Ensure that private entities that offer facilities and services which are open or provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

20. To ensure personal mobility with the greatest possible independence for persons with disabilities, including by:

20.a. Facilitating the personal mobility of persons with disabilities in the manner and at the time of their choice, and at affordable cost.

20.b. Facilitating access by persons with disabilities to quality mobility aids, devices, assistive technologies and forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including by making them available at affordable cost.

20.c. Providing training in mobility skills to persons with disabilities and to specialist staff working with persons with disabilities.

20.d. Encouraging entities that produce mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies to take into account all aspects of mobility for persons with disabilities.

28.1 States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right without discrimination on the basis of disability.

**12** RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



## ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

9.2.g. Promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet;

9.2.h. Promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost.

21.a. Providing information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost;

21.b. Accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions;

21.c. Urging private entities that provide services to the general public, including through the Internet, to provide information and services in accessible and usable formats for persons with disabilities.

21.d. Encouraging the mass media, including providers of information through the Internet, to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities.

21.e. Recognizing and promoting the use of sign languages.

24.3. To learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community.

24.3.a. Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;

24.3.b. Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;

24.3.c. Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.

**13** CLIMATE  
ACTION



## TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

4.3. In the development and implementation of legislation and policies to implement the present Convention, and in other decision-making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities, States Parties shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations.

**14** LIFE  
BELOW WATER



## CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

No links to CRPD

The SDG is as relevant to persons with disabilities as everyone, but there are no specific relevant UN CRPD links.

**15** LIFE  
ON LAND



## PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS.

No links to CRPD

The SDG is as relevant to persons with disabilities as everyone, but there are no specific relevant UN CRPD links.

**16** PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS



## PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS.

Some of the relevant UN CPRD articles:

4.3. States Parties shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations.

13.1. ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others...in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings.

13.2. promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.

14.1 States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others:

- (a) Enjoy the right to liberty and security of person;
- (b) Are not deprived of their liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily, and that any deprivation of liberty is in conformity with the law, and that the existence of a disability shall in no case justify a deprivation of liberty.

15.1. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his or her free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

15.2. all effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, from being subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

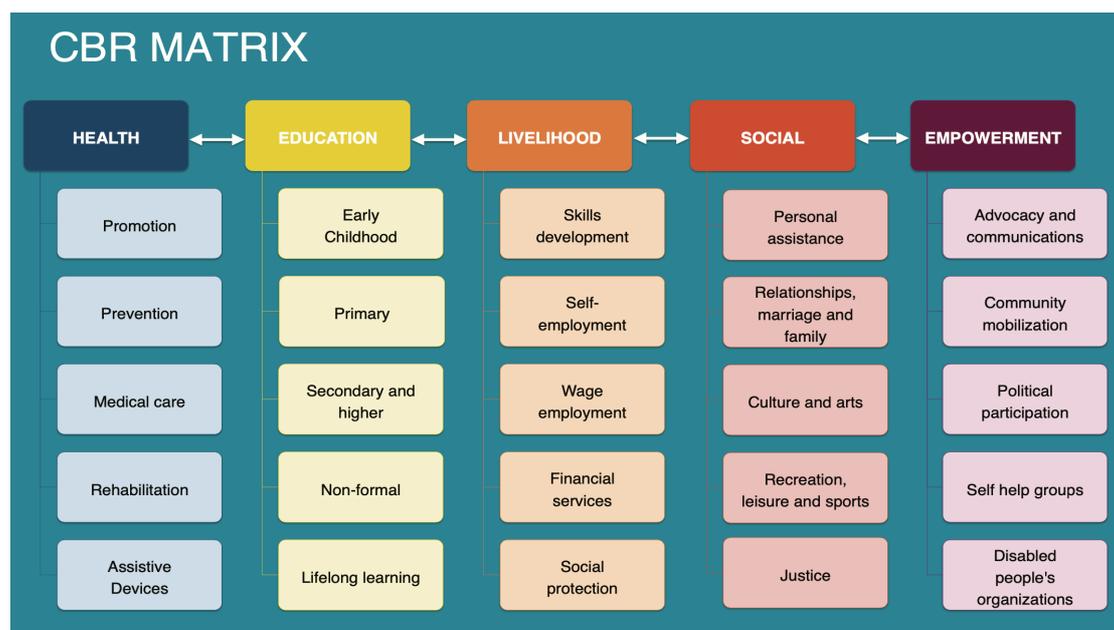
16.1. all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects.



Some of the relevant UN CRPD articles:

32.1. The importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts for the realization of the purpose and objectives of the present Convention, and will undertake appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among States and, as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities.

## Links between the UN CRPD, SDGs and CBR Matrix



The CBR Matrix is part of the CBR Guidelines launched in 2010. CBR was originally focused on medical interventions, but evolved over time and the CBR Matrix was developed to show that persons with disabilities need inclusion across all areas of life – not just access to health services.

Community Based Rehabilitation, or Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) as it is increasingly referred to, to reflect its broad range, is the strategy that this training promotes to enable persons with disabilities to achieve their rights under the UN CRPD and in the realisation of the SDGs for persons with disabilities.

