



# Advancing Disability Inclusion in the UNFCCC Lima Work Programme on Gender

## Key Messages



While the UNFCCC has institutionalised gender mainstreaming, disability inclusion is stalled at the recognition level, necessitating transition from symbolic preambles into actionable deliverables, specific indicators, and accountability mechanisms within GAP



To ensure climate justice, climate action should mandate the systematic collection of disability-disaggregated data and adopt universal accessibility standards for all climate processes, ensuring persons with disabilities are not excluded from policy evidence and physical participation

## Current Gaps

Lack of disability-disaggregated data leaves policymakers without the evidence needed to design targeted interventions

## Executive Summary

The 2015 Paris Agreement embeds human rights and equity principles at the core of climate action. This positions gender equality and disability inclusion as essential elements of climate policy rather than optional considerations.

Although gender is successfully operationalized through the Lima Work Programme on Gender and Gender Action Plans (GAP), disability is absent from their operational structures. This gap necessitates a critical approach that acknowledges progress in gender mainstreaming while addressing the exclusion of disability. Strong normative foundations notwithstanding, subsequent negotiation texts and national reports rarely move beyond tokenistic references to disability.

The consequences of this omission are profound, as climate impacts deepen existing inequalities for persons with disabilities, whose specific needs are absent from adaptation, mitigation, and finance strategies. The trajectory of the GAP shows that disability inclusion has stalled at the level of recognition, undermining the promise of intersectionality. This necessitates transition to actionable deliverables, measurable indicators and accountability mechanisms within GAP.

Current measurable indicators track male/female participation but ignore disability status and accessibility measures

Calls for capacity building in just transition programmes lack requirements for accessible curricula or incentives for employers to recruit persons with disabilities, risking their continued exclusion from the formal sector



# Policy Recommendations



**P1**

## **Integrate disability into LWPG and GAP framework**

Amend the Gender Action Plan to include disability as a distinct dimension of gender equality. Require disability-specific objectives and indicators across all GAP priority areas, including participation, accessibility, outcomes, and reporting. Mandate disability-disaggregated data, integrate disability criteria into the 2029 Belém GAP review, and support Party capacity to collect, analyse, and use this data for evidence-based climate action.

**P2**

## **Mandate accessibility standards across UNFCCC processes**

Adopt minimum UNFCCC accessibility standards, ensure accessible platforms and participation mechanisms, and allocate dedicated resources for interpretation, assistive technologies, and accessible formats.

**P3**

## **Integrate disability inclusion into climate finance criteria**

Require disability inclusion criteria in UNFCCC finance, mandate inclusive project design, and track climate finance benefiting persons with disabilities.

**P4**

## **Visibility, Agenda-Setting, and Procedural Accessibility**

Dedicate a disability-inclusive COP Day per cycle, establish standard Gender Day accessibility protocols, and require reporting on accessibility implementation across COPs.

**P5**

## **Establish dedicated funding and participation support for disability inclusion**

Establish dedicated budget lines within the GAP and relevant UNFCCC workstreams to fund accessibility measures, participation of persons with disabilities, disability-inclusive programme design, and monitoring. Support nomination and participation of persons with disabilities as negotiators and experts through targeted funds and travel support, and require annual reporting on uptake and use of accessibility and participation funding.

**P6**

## **Expand the mandate of national gender focal points**

Revise the mandate of national gender focal points to include explicit responsibility for disability mainstreaming within climate policies and GAP implementation. Provide targeted capacity-building and guidance on disability inclusion and intersectionality, and encourage coordination with national disability authorities and organizations of persons with disabilities.

**P7**

## **Institutionalize Participation and Co-Design with Persons with Disabilities**

Establish mechanisms for the meaningful participation of OPDs in GAP implementation, review processes, and finance decision-making. This participation must be supported through early engagement in policy development and adequate resourcing for accessibility.



*This policy brief was researched and written by Wambui Muchaba and Belinda Momanyi in their capacity as consultants commissioned by the European Disability Forum for the UNFCCC Disability Caucus, under the supervision of Marion Steff (EDF), and funded by the Disability Rights Fund.*