

96th Standing Committee of the UNHCR

16-18 June 2026

Update on the Executive Committee Conclusion Process

Collective NGO Statement – Oral Version

Dear Chair, distinguished delegates, colleagues,

This statement was drafted in consultation with a wide range of NGOs, including RLOs.

ExCom Conclusion Number 110 is a primary international policy framework guiding disability inclusion in humanitarian action. Sixteen years after its adoption, we welcome the process to update this Conclusion to ensure disability inclusion is fully embedded across all refugee protection and response systems.

This process represents a vital opportunity to strengthen the implementation of the Refugee Convention, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the Global Compact on Refugees. Despite global commitments, refugees and internally displaced persons with disabilities continue to face systemic exclusion and major barriers in accessing registration. Too often, humanitarian responses are designed without universal accessibility standards, sign language interpretation, or disability-inclusive infrastructure, which undermines dignity and equal participation.

Accessibility is not optional; it is a prerequisite for the realization of rights. In line with Article 9 of the CRPD, all responses should ensure accessibility to physical environments, communications, and digital systems, with resources allocated early on. We must adhere to the principle “Nothing About Us Without Us,” involving refugees with disabilities meaningfully in policy development and program design.

We further recognize emerging protection risks, such as climate-related hazards. Persons with disabilities in camps and overcrowded settings are disproportionately affected by extreme heat. Disability-inclusive responses should integrate accessible early warning systems and heat-sensitive health services into climate adaptation efforts.

Women and girls with disabilities face intersecting discrimination and heightened risks of gender-based violence and exclusion from essential services. We call for targeted, survivor-centered, and adequately funded measures to ensure their safe access to protection and leadership.

To move from short-term emergency responses toward long-term self-reliance, we support the High Commissioner’s “50 by 35” ambition. This requires identifying and including refugees with disabilities within national education, social protection, and livelihood programs. We urge greater collaboration with refugee-led organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) as trusted first responders.

Turning commitments into practice requires flexible, multi-year funding that is direct and accessible to local and refugee-led organizations. Accessibility costs—including sign language, assistive technology, and personal assistance—must be recognized as essential operational costs, not optional additions. At a time of global funding cuts, we urge donors not to deprioritize disability inclusion and to strengthen accountability through disability-disaggregated data.

Recommendations:

- **Adopt a rights-based ExCom Conclusion** aligned with the CRPD.
- **Ensure accessibility** across all communications, infrastructure, and services.
- **Guarantee meaningful participation** and leadership of refugees with disabilities in decision-making and program design.
- **Prioritize targeted protection** for women and girls with disabilities.
- **Mainstream disability inclusion** across all sectors, including climate action and peacebuilding.
- **Increase flexible funding** and ensure it is equitably available to refugee-led organizations and OPDs.

If we are serious about inclusion, we must move beyond symbolic commitments toward concrete action, accessible systems, and shared decision-making. Disability inclusion is a core responsibility across all humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts.

NGOs, including RLOs stand ready to support Member States in these efforts.

Thank you.