

**Listening to the voices of autism self-advocates in the Global South: Ubuntu, “stories from Africa”**

17th session of the Conference of State Parties to the CRPD, United Nations

**12 June 2024 12:30 – 14:00 pm EST** | New York City, United States - **Online** **only**

**Host:** The Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum (CDPF)

**Zoom Link:**

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUtcO2srT4vGdHHZjayoi8IW-\_4Z0Q7hkNt

Join us to gain insights, hear powerful stories, and learn how we can support and uplift autistic individuals and their families. In collaboration with the Department of woman, youth and disabilities (DWYD) (South Africa) and the South African Disability Alliance (SADA), the stories that will be shared and will centre around the articles of the CRPD that are of primary importance to autistic people such as Article 5 (equality and discrimination), 9 (accessibility), Article 24 (education), Article 25 (health), and Article 27 (work and employment).In the presentations, these autistic self-advocates will highlight current strategies, and coming from the continent of Africa, how religious, cultural and social factors influence the daily livelihood of autistic individuals in the global south.

Neurodiversity includes various developmental disorders like ASD, ADHD, ADD, dyslexia, and alexia. These conditions share similar brain profiles and fall under the neurodiversity umbrella. The global movement promotes acceptance and recognition of neurodiverse individuals. The prevalence of autism is 1-2% globally (approx. 78 million people). Despite growing acceptance, many face challenges in accessing services, stigma, and discrimination.

The focus will be on the continent of Africa as:

Thirteen State Parties to the CRPD have national autism strategies.

* 1. Learning from autistic adults' experiences in Africa is crucial.
  2. Listening to African autism self-advocates can help build comprehensive support strategies on how it will improve their lives on the continent

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