**Statement from the Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum (CDPF) Women’s Forum on the Commission on the Status of Women 2025**

As women and girls with disabilities continue to face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, their voices must be central in shaping global gender policies and commitments. On behalf of the Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum(CDPF) as brought to our attention by our Women’s Forum, we express our deep concern regarding the absence of a specific paragraph addressing women and girls with disabilities in the Zero Draft for the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) and the proposed Multi-Year Program of Work for the Commission on the Status of Women.

This omission undermines the Commission's commitment to achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and ensuring no one is left behind, as outlined in key frameworks like the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The lack of inclusion of women and girls with disabilities poses significant risks to the overall goals of the Commission on the Status of Women. It fails to address intersectional discrimination, as women and girls with disabilities face compounded discrimination due to their gender and disability status. Ignoring their unique challenges creates a gap in addressing intersectionality, a principle central to achieving meaningful gender equality.

Furthermore, this exclusion undermines inclusive development by limiting their access to education, employment, healthcare, and social protection systems, contradicting commitments to universal access and equitable opportunities. The omission also results in missed opportunities for leadership and political participation. Disabled Women and girls are vital agents of change who can contribute significantly to leadership, innovation, and decision-making processes. Failing to include them in the Commission's agenda diminishes their potential contributions.

Additionally, the draft inadequately responds to structural barriers, highlighting issues such as poverty, violence, attitude and discriminatory practices without acknowledging how these disproportionately affect women and girls with disabilities. Data collection efforts are compromised as the draft calls for disaggregated data collection by various factors but does not emphasize disability as a critical category. This oversight limits the ability to plan for disability inclusion, monitor progress effectively or design evidence-based interventions.

Moreover, the omission weakens global commitments, contradicting frameworks like the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize inclusivity and equality.

To address these concerns and uphold its mission, We call upon the CSW Secretariat, UN Women, and member states to:

* First, include a specific paragraph addressing the rights, needs, and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities in the final draft. Disability should be addressed in all aspects/sectors throughout the document, considering the impact of all proposed actions on this group
* Ensure the Multi-Year Program of Work should incorporate disability-specific considerations, ensuring that each priority theme explicitly addresses the situation of women and girls with disabilities.
* Commit to meaningful consultation with organizations of women with disabilities/disabled women and girls in all stages of policy development and implementation.
* Data collection efforts should mandate disaggregation by disability status alongside other demographic factors.
* Explicit references to women and girls with disabilities should be included in priority themes, review themes, and the multi-year work program.
* Promote Intersectionality by recognizing the unique challenges faced by women with disabilities and ensure disability inclusion in all gender-related policies and frameworks.
* Strengthen Grassroots Involvement by providing accessible platforms for grassroots organizations, particularly those led by women with disabilities, to contribute to CSW discussions and outcomes

The CDPF Women’s Forum stands ready to contribute our expertise and lived experiences to strengthen the inclusivity and effectiveness of the Commission's work. We believe that by addressing these concerns, the Commission can truly fulfill its mandate of promoting gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls, leaving no one behind.

Only through these comprehensive measures can the Commission ensure that its goals are met inclusively and that the rights and needs of women and girls with disabilities are fully recognized and addressed in its important work for them to participate on an equal basis with others.

The CDPF Women’s Forum urges all stakeholders to take immediate action to uphold the principles of equality, non-discrimination, and full participation. Without the voices of grassroots women and women with disabilities, gender equality efforts will remain incomplete and ineffective

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