

Disability Inclusion and Global Development: A Preliminary Analysis of the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Programme within the context of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: *This paper provides a preliminary snapshot of the proposed priorities approved by the United Nations programme designated to support the progressive realisation of the CRPD, the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) outlined by specific Convention Articles and, more broadly, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

Method: *A content analysis of project proposal summaries approved for funding by the UNPRPD was conducted against the CRPD and SDGs. A matrix of data was produced to draw links between proposed objectives and established international frameworks guiding global development.*

Results: *This analysis provides two sets of information. First, a look at the distribution of rights identified in the initial project proposals and accepted by the UNPRPD, establishing a baseline of priorities and outstanding need. Second, it identifies issues that need to be addressed to ensure the advancement of all rights outlined in the CRPD and equitable achievement of the SDGs.*

Conclusion and Implications: *Disability inclusion is necessary to achieve the SDGs in an equitable manner by 2030, as well as implement the CRPD. The UNPRPD supports a diverse range of projects spanning many of the*

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Convention Articles and global goals; however, full participation and scope of disability inclusion requires programming in all areas of both instruments, and this has not yet been fully integrated in the UNPRPD funded project proposals.

Limitations: *This study was limited to the available UNPRPD project proposal summaries that were successful, and did not include all the proposals submitted for consideration. The proposals accepted for funding give insights into the disability inclusive development priorities chosen for project implementation by UN agencies.*

Keywords: *capacity, international cooperation, monitoring and implementation, rights, UN agency*

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD or the Convention) is an international treaty which identifies the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as the obligations of national governments to promote, protect and fulfil those rights. The CRPD has been ratified so far by 181 countries. The CRPD is intended as a human rights instrument with an explicit social development dimension (United Nations, n.d.). Disability inclusion is a priority for development due to the extent of exclusion of people with disabilities globally and must be addressed as part of achieving “society for all,” as declared in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN General Assembly, 2015). The United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2018), highlighted the importance of disability inclusion in the global goals, stating “the Sustainable Development Goals can only be achieved with the full participation of everyone, including persons with disabilities.” Disability inclusion is an essential part of realising the vision for 2030, making the CRPD a vital tool to support global progress.

Working towards a society for all, based on full citizenship of persons with disabilities, the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) is a joint United Nations initiative to advance the rights of persons with disabilities. Understanding the process and priorities of UNPRPD projects is essential to learn about and improve global efforts, as international development policy and programming continue to only partially address disability inclusion (MacLachlan & Swartz, 2009; Gartrell et al, 2016).

Background

Development projects and programmes implementing disability rights can take a variety of forms. One example is the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD). The UNPRPD aims to combine and optimise strengths from partnering entities, including United Nations agencies, local governments, civil society, and additional experts (United Nations Development Programme - UNDP, 2016). It does so by enabling structural changes that progressively fulfil disability rights and enhance capacity building of the individual partners, as well as collaboration between them. As of March 10, 2019, the UNPRPD Multi Donor Trust Fund has supported 39 country projects since its inception in December 2011 (UNDP, 2016) (see Table 1). The UNPRPD works to change normative structures within and across social systems, defined as "... the long-term underpinning conditions that shape social interactions" (UNDP, 2016). Country projects seek to reform the fundamental operations in social life, including actions, behaviours and perceptions that contain exclusionary norms, resource allocation and networks that work in tandem to frame individual experiences through legislative policy and cultural norms (UNDP, 2016). Two examples of structural change processes facilitated by the UNPRPD are briefly described here - one in Armenia and the other in South Africa.

In Armenia, the UN Country Team implemented a new national disability determination model, based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health or ICF (UNPRPD Technical Secretariat, 2018). This included the shift from medical assessments to a contextualised assessment of disability with social and environmental factors (in addition to the conventional medical assessment), determined with significant inputs from the individuals being assessed regarding their own experience of disability alongside a range of health professionals (UNPRPD Technical Secretariat, 2018). In this approach, clinicians are not the sole decision-makers regarding an individual's disability status; rather, a range of social experiences and environmental barriers are incorporated, reflecting a stronger rights-based model, and may include the presence of a representative from an Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) during the assessment. Disability determination in line with the Convention underpins the systems that follow disability status, such as accommodations or rights-based healthcare and education.

In South Africa, the UNPRPD programme triggered structural changes through synchronised state policy revisions to ensure the core guiding principles of CRPD

were embedded (UNPRPD Technical Secretariat, 2016). Beyond addressing policy and legislative barriers, the project implemented a Disability Rights Monitoring and Evaluation Framework across government sectors (UNDP, 2016), solidifying the CRPD as a state norm. Thus national level reforms in the process of disability determination in Armenia and disability rights-based policy in South Africa strengthen equal opportunities for full citizenship of persons with disabilities, thus enabling protection, promotion and fulfilment of their rights as enshrined in CRPD and leaving no one behind in attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Objective

For an overview of the relationship between CRPD Articles and the SDG goals addressed across the UNPRPD global programme so far, this paper presents content analyses of project summaries in terms of the CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals. Such an analysis provides a preliminary snapshot of the CRPD Articles selected for funding by the UNPRPD in three rounds of projects and the SDGs addressed within the proposal objectives. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on the similarities and gaps found in priorities across proposals that were awarded funding.

METHOD

Table 1: UNPRPD Country Projects by Funding Round

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Costa Rica, Indonesia, Moldova, Mozambique, Occupied Palestinian territories, Pacific Island countries, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine, Vietnam	Armenia, Bolivia, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Mexico, Sudan, Tajikistan, Uganda	Benin, Bhutan, Cambodia, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Guatemala, Malawi, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Serbia, Timor-Leste, Uruguay, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Data Collection

The data for this study includes 36 of the 39 UNPRPD country project summaries to date, accessed from the UNPRPD Technical Secretariat. Five project summaries were not included in the data from the UNPRPD Technical Secretariat (Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Namibia, Nepal, and Vietnam); however two (Nepal and Vietnam) were located on the MPTF website (2019). Both sources of data were included in the study, leaving only three project summaries from funding rounds 1-3 excluded from this analysis. Each project summary contained 1-2 paragraphs giving context to disability in their respective countries, followed by a short overview of the project objectives. This study analysed only the project objectives and coded deductively based on CRPD Articles 5-33, as well as all 17 of the SDGs. United Nations agencies involved with each project were also listed alongside the summaries, and provided a supplemental analysis of agency participation across CRPD Articles 5-33.

The total number of project proposals submitted to the UN was not known in this data set, nor were the criteria on which projects were selected for funding or declined. While recognising this limitation, the study does not claim to assess the breadth of issues identified in the applications, but only the issues identified in those that were successfully funded over three cycles. This provides the opportunity to look at objectives supported by the UNPRPD programme in line with its stated intentions to “seek to enable structurally focused social action aimed at advancing disability rights, in keeping with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (UNDP, 2016). The proposals approved for funding therefore give an insight into topics supported by the programme and, as this study shows, highlight concentrations of support in some areas outlined in the CRPD, but not all. The projects funded to date also provide evidence of attention to some SDGs, while others are currently not supported by projects selected by the UNPRPD. The authors of the current study acknowledge that the absence of or a low number of projects addressing particular Convention Articles or SDGs, does not necessarily reflect a lower priority for these. It may be that projects addressing such priorities were less well-designed or that the intention is to give these priorities more attention in subsequent programme cycles, or for other reasons. The following section outlines the protocol used to gain a deeper understanding of how the the stated intentions in the UNPRPD programme are delivered in the proposed objectives selected for project implementation.

Data Analysis

Preparation for analysis began with a general organisation of the relevant coding categories. Cross-cutting Articles 5-9 are also specific rights, and were included in this study to better understand the approach taken by the UNPRPD programme. In the case of Articles 5-9, the rights in question must have been direct programming targets rather than cross-cutting another CRPD right. Articles 5-9 were only counted in this study if the project summary addressed the right as a targeted intervention in programming, e.g., projects implementing the rights of children (Article 7) as opposed to the whole population of persons with disabilities, or systematic accessibility interventions (Article 9) rather than a principle cross-cutting substantive rights as a secondary outcome. In this way, projects that improve systems of education without a direct reference to how the proposal intends to implement the diverse rights of children with disabilities were only marked in Article 24 for the right to education. Although children are a primary recipient within the system of education, the subject for intervention was education.

Monitoring and implementation Articles 31-33 were also included in this study with a similar logic. States parties' obligations for progressive realisation of the CRPD have actionable items that align with the UNPRPD programme structure. Statistics and data collection, international cooperation (e.g., projects targeting ratification of the CRPD) and state monitoring and implementation, all involve actions eligible to be categorised in this study.

Articles 1- 4 were not included, as they are cross-cutting principles applied throughout the Convention, including: purpose, definitions, general principles and general obligations (CRPD, 2006). These provide the landscape for the Articles that follow, and are not specific targets for development. In other words, Articles 1- 4 are not mutually exclusive from the subsequent rights; rather, they are inherent to the specific rights used in this study to match the primary outcomes in project proposals. Furthermore, Articles beyond 33 involve procedures between States and the Committee to the CRPD, and final provisions (CRPD, 2006). The UNPRPD programme aims to address the Convention between duty bearers, rights holders, the UNCT and other experts (2016), limiting the scope of this analysis to Articles 5-33. While acknowledging that analysis of other articles in the CRPD may be instructive, it was beyond the scope of the current research.

The Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities - CRPD

The UNPRPD country projects are written in the language of the CRPD, so the coding process resembled matching pairs. Articles were seen as whole coding categories, even when some project objectives only reference part of the Article components. For example, the country project in Armenia addresses Article 25 (right to health) by establishing a disability determination assessment to be implemented nationwide (UNPRPD Technical Secretariat, 2018). Reform of disability determination by medical professionals to a rights-based model addresses the right to health; however, it does not address the cost of services in Article 25(a) or location of service provision listed in Article 25(c). Alternatively, some project summaries had limited detail, as is the case of Togo stating health was targeted, with no additional information. In both of these summaries, Article 25 was marked on the data matrix. This categorical approach followed through the entire analysis, providing an assessment of manifest content in project summaries.

Data was organised in Microsoft Excel, by country project on the vertical axis and categories (CRPD Articles or SDGs) on the horizontal axis. Each item occupied a single cell, where an individual country project could be followed by row across all categorical columns from left to right. This format could also highlight the frequency of programming by Article or goal. For example, the UNPRPD as a global development programme can be seen to have substantial contribution to SDGs 10 and 17 (reduced inequalities and partnerships for the goals), with a substantial programmatic commitment within those categories. Each country was listed in order of funding round (round 1 countries in alphabetical order, followed by rounds 2 and 3), displaying the change in priorities over time. Each project summary was critically analysed for programming objectives, and individually placed in the corresponding categories.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The CRPD outlines the human rights to which people with disabilities are entitled, that are the same rights afforded to all people as they are rooted in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNPRPD, 2016), nesting the Convention within a system of larger directives. There is synergy between these documents and the SDGs, as they all provide direction for global progress across populations. Disability inclusion and the SDGs are often discussed in terms of the disability-specific indicators that set the 2030 goals apart from the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs), which had no direct mention of disability (United Nations, 2011). Disability development is still development, and this matrix steps outside the disability-specific lens and compares the UNPRPD programme to the systems it is embedded in. The cooperation between documents allowed for an additional content analysis of the same units (UNPRPD project objectives) against the SDGs.

The same procedures used to analyse the 36 UNPRPD project summaries with reference to the Articles of the CRPD were applied to coding based on the 17 SDGs. Project targets were screened with the United Nations General Assembly SDG resolution document (2015) to fully understand each goal against the project objectives. The same project objectives were coded to the 17 goals as whole categorical units, rather than to isolated targets and indicators. Formatting design remained the same, and were placed in a separate Microsoft Excel sheet.

Each CRPD Article or SDG was treated as an independent category for coding the project summaries. The Articles were then analysed according to type: cross-cutting principles and specific rights, substantive articles, and monitoring and evaluation based on the Convention framework. For analysis of the CRPD, basic addition and division were used to show the frequency and percentages of UNPRPD project targets in a specific Article or category of Articles by the total number of project targets. For example, the total number of project targets identified in the country summaries accepted for funding were 178. Based on that total, the data shows which type of CRPD Articles are more frequently addressed in the selected projects. Between the cross-cutting Articles 5-9, substantive Articles 10-30 and monitoring and evaluation Articles 31-33, the total number of project targets in each category are roughly similar. Furthermore, the number of project targets found in each category were divided by the number of Articles in each category. The 66 targets between 5 cross-cutting Articles versus 58 targets in 21 substantive Articles then throws light on the concentrations of development initiatives found in selected UNPRPD country projects.

Articles 10-30 accounted for 33% of the total data in 21 rights, with a particularly high concentration of data in 4 specific Articles. In this case, a percentage was also taken for the number of project targets in Articles 24-27 within substantive rights to discuss the notable frequency in these four topics.

The SDGs were treated as whole categories and grouped into clusters of data based on frequency in UNPRPD country project summaries (see Figure 3).

In general, UNPRPD project summaries were found in clusters of zero, few, moderate and high frequencies of data. These groups, particularly the SDGs not found in UNPRPD programming, are discussed in the following sections.

RESULTS

The projects supported by the UNPRPD are a vehicle for national disability development work aligned to one global framework, resulting in a range of contributions to development goals in both the CRPD and the SDGs. This section presents findings from the content analysis of the UNPRPD project summaries against the CRPD Articles 5-33 and SDGs. Importantly, the SDGs yet to be addressed in project proposals supported by the UNPRPD programme are identified. Finally, this section presents the UN agencies selected to participate in the proposed projects and the frequency of engagement between each specialised agency.

The CRPD

The results of the CRPD matrix show a strong concentration of work in the cross-cutting, monitoring and implementation Articles, and Articles 24-27 of the Convention. The 5 cross-cutting Articles accounted for 37% of the data points found in UNPRPD project summaries. 30% of the data accounted for three Articles (31-33) of the Convention for monitoring and implementation. Of the 29 CRPD Articles included in this study, 33% of project targets addressed the 21 substantive Articles. Furthermore, 71% of those targets in substantive Articles (33% of the total) were found in four specific rights (Articles 24-27). Additionally, many Articles of the Convention are not evident in the UNPRPD project summaries (see Table 2). The distribution of data (both data absence and concentrations) present a pattern of development activities approved for funding.

Figure 1: Frequency of CRPD Articles targeted by UNPRPD programming

CRPD article	36 UNPRPD country projects																																				Total
Article 5	█																																				16
Article 6	█																																				13
Article 7	█																																				12
Article 8	█																																				18
Article 9	█																																				7
Article 10																																					0
Article 11																																					0
Article 12	█																																				2
Article 13	█																																				3
Article 14																																					0
Article 15																																					0
Article 16	█																																				6
Article 17	█																																				1
Article 18	█																																				0
Article 19	█																																				1
Article 20																																					0
Article 21	█																																				2
Article 22																																					0
Article 23	█																																				1
Article 24	█																																				11
Article 25	█																																				11
Article 26	█																																				6
Article 27	█																																				13
Article 28																																					0
Article 29	█																																				1
Article 30																																					0
Article 31	█																																				10
Article 32	█																																				16
Article 33	█																																				28

Cross-cutting Articles 5-9

After categorising the data, a total of 66 project targets were located in CRPD Articles 5-9. The data found that 16 country projects (of the 36 in this study) target equality and non-discrimination as described in CRPD Article 5. Awareness-raising was the most frequent cross-cutting right targeted in 18 country projects. Both Articles were present in all three rounds of country projects. Article 6, addressing women with disabilities, was seen in 13 of the UNPRPD projects identified in funding rounds 1 and 3, without mention of Article 6 in the 10 country projects from round 2. Children with disabilities were targeted in 12 projects and found across all funding rounds. Accessibility was least prevalent, evidenced in 7 project summaries.

Monitoring and Implementation Articles 31-33

Monitoring and implementation of the Convention are a priority for UNPRPD programming based on the Strategic and Operational Framework (2016) to institutionalise a partnership between local governments and local experts (e.g., OPDs, civil society) to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are realised with the support of the United Nations. The UNPRPD initiative is evidenced in the data, with 78% of country projects focusing on national implementation. Article 33(3) of the CRPD (2006) highlights the role of persons with disabilities

and OPDs in national implementation and monitoring, and is prioritised in the UNPRPD projects aimed at building local capacity within OPDs and between these actors and government entities for progress and accountability.

International cooperation (Article 32) was targeted in 16 UNPRPD country projects, primarily in rounds 1 and 3. Round 2 had only one project focused on aligning the national frameworks to the CRPD. Many projects worked locally to develop a National Disability Strategy, but were not explicitly assessed against the international CRPD standards. A few projects also partnered with other international NGOs such as Humanity and Inclusion or other international or regional experts, resulting in a total of 44% of projects targeting Article 32.

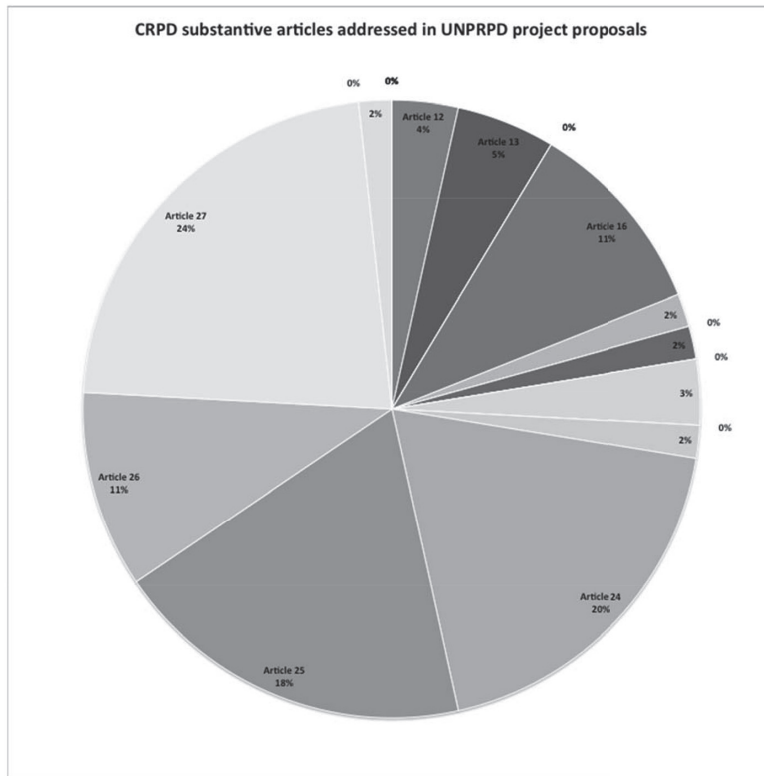
Finally, Article 31 recognises the importance of statistics and data collection to enable effective use of the Convention (CRPD, 2006). About 28% of UNPRPD country projects target data collection and improved capacity to generate and use disability-specific data in policies and programming.

Substantive Rights and Obligations

Substantive rights in the CRPD include both civil and political rights, as well as social and cultural rights specific to a disability context. Of the 58 substantive rights addressed, 71% of the data fell within 4 Articles. CRPD Articles 24-27 relate to education, health, rehabilitation and employment, and work. The next most frequent project objective fell under Article 16 - freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse. All 6 projects targeting violence were specifically aimed at reducing gender-based violence (GBV). These data were categorised in Article 16 rather than Article 6, as the interventions listed were specific to violence (gender-specific violence is articulated throughout Article 16), rather than women as bearers of a broad range of rights, including freedom from violence. As shown earlier (see Methods), this is an example of Article 6 as a cross-cutting principle as well as a specific right.

Figure 2 shows the percentages of CRPD substantive rights found in the approved UNPRPD project proposals. Of the 58 data points in Articles 10-30, Articles 16 and 24-27 are most frequently supported by the UNPRPD projects, and many Articles are not currently in programming.

Figure 2: Percentage of each Substantive Right found in CRPD Articles 10-30 from approved UNPRPD project proposal summaries



Nine CRPD Articles were not found in UNPRPD project proposals. All Articles not yet addressed in project proposals were substantive rights, covering a diverse range of topics including right to privacy, risk and humanitarian emergencies, and participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport among others listed below in Table 2. Many of these rights lack available research but are however known barriers, such as adequate standard of living, to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. While the UNPRPD project summaries used for this study represent the starting point for various projects, identifying the rights that are recurrent and absent from United Nations programming provides a better understanding of which rights were supported for funding and which remain less supported or unsupported. Concentrations of rights supported by the UNPRPD across country contexts does not determine global priorities, though it is worth noting that the UNPRPD is one of the largest disability initiatives to progressively implement the CRPD, and their selected priorities are located in a broader network of influence within international development.

Table 2: Articles absent from UNPRPD project proposal summaries

Articles absent from UNPRPD project summaries
Article 10: Right to life
Article 11: Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies
Article 14: Liberty and security of person
Article 15: Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
Article 18: Liberty of movement and nationality
Article 20: Personal mobility
Article 22: Respect for privacy
Article 28: Adequate standard of living and social protection
Article 30: Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The UNPRPD programme promotes several of the SDGs, with a strong emphasis on specific goals. The underlying premise of the UNPRPD programme is to engage new or strengthen existing partnerships, primarily between government entities and OPDs (UNDP, 2016). The data supports a partnership approach taken by the UNPRPD, evidenced by 22 country projects targeting interventions aligned with SDG 17. Capacity building among civil society and representative organisations of persons with disabilities for the purpose of partnership with government entities and decision-makers are prioritised among the country project summaries in all funding rounds, and found in SDG 17.18 regarding data, monitoring and accountability (UN General Assembly, 2015). Similarly, the capacity of government institutions to appropriately address the rights of persons with disabilities outlined in the CRPD were captured in SDG 16. It is worth noting that while the summaries did not discuss the capacity building and institutional strengthening of the UNCT, the participation of the United Nations teams within this UNPRPD partnership approach are likely affected by programming as well.

National legislation reviews were very common in the UNPRPD project summaries aimed at reducing existing structural barriers in policy and legislation for persons with disabilities. These data were categorised under SDG 10 : reduced inequalities. SDG 10.3 states, “Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation and action in this regard”

(UN General Assembly, 2015). Twenty-six country project summaries explicitly work to address legislative barriers. SDGs 10, 16 and 17 were the most frequently addressed goals in UNPRPD programming.

Goals addressing more concrete topics such as health, education, work and gender equality were evident in moderate frequency, much like the cross-referenced CRPD results. In particular, many of the participating United Nations agencies are focused on specialised topics, such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to decent work, World Health Organisation (WHO) to health and well-being, UN Women to gender equality, and UNICEF to education. Established technical expertise aligned with specific SDG goals were apparent in all three funding rounds of UNPRPD programming.

Few project proposals directly targeted SDG 1: poverty, SDG 9: industry, innovation and infrastructure, and SDG 11: sustainable cities and communities. Many of the goals in this data cluster are important for realising the rights in the CRPD, such as assistive technology, public spaces, and access and affordability of communities. With less than five UNPRPD country proposals addressing these goals in the initial summaries, additional research is needed to better understand current efforts.

Several SDGs were absent from UNPRPD country project summaries used for this study. Environmental goals are not represented, which provides reason to continue researching the connection between disability and their surrounding context beyond the built environment. Hunger and clean water and sanitation (SDGs 2 and 6) are not seen in approved proposals to date, despite the evidence available to link disability with the repercussions of disproportionate poverty affecting people with disabilities globally (World Health Organisation & World Bank, 2011). Furthermore, the goals absent from UNPRPD project summaries have a reinforcing relationship to the SDGs targeted with the lowest frequency (see Figure 3), including SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), highlighting an opportunity to mainstream disability rights and inclusion throughout the SDGs. Figure 3 categorises the number of UNPRPD projects targeting various SDGs in programming.

Figure 3: Frequency of SDGs targeted by UNPRPD programming

Sustainable Development Goals	36 UNPRPD country projects																				Total	
SDG 1	■																					1
SDG 2																						0
SDG 3	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	12
SDG 4	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	14
SDG 5	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	11
SDG 6																						0
SDG 7																						0
SDG 8	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	13
SDG 9	■	■																				2
SDG 10	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	25
SDG 11	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	4
SDG 12																						0
SDG 13																						0
SDG 14																						0
SDG 15																						0
SDG 16	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	26
SDG 17	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	22

Table 3: UNPRPD country project objectives by SDGs

Number of UNPRPD projects	SDGs represented
Few (1-5 data points)	SDG 1: No poverty SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities
Moderate (10-15 data points)	SDG 3: Good health and well-being SDG 4: Quality education SDG 5: Gender equality SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth
High (20-30 data points)	SDG 10: Reduced inequalities SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals
Zero projects targets	SDG 2: Zero hunger SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production SDG 13: Climate action SDG 14: Life below water SDG 15: Life on land

The Danish Institute for Human Rights (2018) has highlighted the value of examining the interaction between the Articles of the Convention and the SDGs.

Disability is referenced in multiple parts of the SDGs, specifically in the parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, as well as data collection and the monitoring of the SDGs. Tebbutt et al (2016) have illustrated how Assistive Products are relevant to the equitable and inclusive achievement of each of the SDGs. Having noted that some SDGs are not addressed by approved UNPRPD project proposals, Table 4 provides some idea of local projects by the unmet global goals and corresponding CRPD Articles. The examples provided include persons with disabilities in addressing barriers, and offer a starting point to include new objectives to programming, both at the Convention level and global SDG framework.

Table 4: Disability Inclusion applied to SDGs absent from UNPRPD project proposal summaries

SDG 2: No hunger	CRPD Article 28: Adequate standard of living and social protection	<p><i>Application:</i> Persons with disabilities live in disproportionately high rates of poverty, and access to employment, communities and accommodation resources (e.g., personal care attendant) affecting food security and levels of nutrition (UNDESA, 2018).</p> <p><i>Example:</i> As of 27 February 2019, the ADA National Network and Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo websites highlight universal design techniques in community gardens, promotion of inclusive public space, increased access to food, stress reduction and community engagement for persons with disabilities.</p>
SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation	CRPD Article 28: Adequate standard of living and social protection Article 32: International cooperation	<p><i>Application:</i> Disability accessible latrines and clean water in public spaces will reduce environmental barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from engaging in their communities, and increase awareness among community members without disabilities.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Development projects in Uganda and Zambia led by WaterAid initiated a community-driven programme for accessible latrines and sanitation, resulting in increased access to public spaces and community awareness, in addition to the development of an inclusive standard for local WaSH projects (Wapling & WaterAid, 2014).</p>

<p>SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy</p>	<p>CRPD Article 28: Adequate standard of living and social protection</p> <p>Article 32: International cooperation</p>	<p><i>Application:</i> Exclusion from schools and public spaces, and increased rates of poverty, mean that households with an individual with a disability are more often lacking heat or have increased exposure to poor air quality from burning inefficient fuels indoors (UNDESA, 2018).</p> <p><i>Example:</i> A solar-powered wheelchair has been designed and proposed in Bangladesh to promote an affordable alternative to power chairs for increased access to individuals with mobility disabilities, and low environmental impact (Sakib et al, 2015).</p>
<p>SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production</p>	<p>CRPD Article 9: Accessibility</p> <p>Article 21: Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information</p> <p>Article 24: Education</p> <p>Article 27: Work and employment</p>	<p><i>Application:</i> Individuals with disabilities face barriers to participating in market production, including skills and opportunity to engage in sustainable production.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> An NGO in Serbia called Udruženje Naša Kuća, or Our House, recognises that individuals with developmental disabilities who lack legal capacity are left out of critical sectors including vocational training and employment. The organisation serves as a day programme to provide technical training in a variety of production skills such as making chocolate flavoured from fresh fruits and herbs from the gardens on side or eco-friendly cardboard bins and boxes and pressed paper for wedding invitations. Members of the organisation become part of an environmentally conscious approach to production, and skills training for meaningful participation in market activities (https://www.facebook.com/nasa.kuca/).</p>
<p>SDG 13: Climate action</p>	<p>CRPD Article 9: Accessibility</p> <p>Article: 10: Right to life</p>	<p><i>Application:</i> Individuals with disabilities are at an increased risk during climate-related emergencies due to lack of standardised preparedness or evacuation strategies (Handicap International, 2015; UNDESA, 2018; Wolbring & Leopatra, 2012).</p>

	<p>Article 11: Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies</p> <p>Article 21: Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information</p> <p>Article 24: Education</p>	<p><i>Example:</i> Malteser International and the Community Empowerment and Resilience Association (CERA) (2017) implemented visual early warning systems for deaf or hard of hearing individuals in Myanmar, increasing a sense of belonging within their local communities and reducing vulnerability in the event of a disaster.</p>
SDG 14: Life below water		<p><i>Application:</i> Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods. Impacts of coastal pollution on childhood disabilities and adverse outcomes for pregnant women (Rahman et al, 2012).</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Projects that aim to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems from pollution involving women with disabilities (recycling). Waste Aid project example - in The Gambia, to capture plastic waste in the coastal town, training in plastics recycling will be offered for women, young people and people with disabilities (Citation-https://resource.co/article/wasteaid-wins-funding-plastics-recycling-project-gambia-12958)</p>

SDG 15: Life on land		<p>While there are no explicit articles within the CRPD to address how SDGs 14 and 15 are relevant to the fundamental rights of persons with disabilities, disproportionate levels of poverty (WHO & World Bank, 2011), food insecurity (UNDESA, 2018), community reliance on agriculture and marine industries, and climate affects on disability (Groce et al, 2011; Wolbring & Leopatra, 2012) all link these SDGs to disability development. Farming for health (di Iacovo et al) and disability on farms (Mohan,1987; Whelan et al, 2009; Gómez-Marín et al, 2004; Field & Jones, 2006; Deboy et al, 2008) are of significance, thus a role for agencies like that of UN Environment Programme and International Fund for Agricultural Development do exist in future rounds of UNPRPD programming.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Green care farms in the United Kingdom are found to support individuals with learning disabilities in an accessible and holistic way, while promoting vocational skills and environmental awareness (Rotheram et al , 2017).</p>
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UN Agencies

Each project summary lists participating United Nations agencies, which were cross-matched with Articles 5-33 of the Convention. These agencies are seen to work together as “One UN” (UNDP, 2016); therefore each agency was tallied as participants on all targets evidenced in the project summary. Tasks may be delegated during implementation to respective agency specialisation; however this analysis looks at the country project as a unit, including all agencies enlisted to contribute. Additionally, the UN agencies were listed by funding round with the number of projects affiliated with each agency (see Figure 3) to see trends as the UNPRPD programme launches new project cycles. The analysis of UN agencies only includes the 34 country projects sent from the UNPRPD Technical Secretariat due to lack of available data for the remaining 5 country projects.

Figure 4: Frequency of UN agency affiliation in 34 UNPRPD Country Projects by Funding Round

Agency	UNPRPD Funding round (34 of 39 country projects)																	
	Round 1				Total	Round 2				Total	Round 3				Total			
UNICEF	■	■	■	■	8	■	■	■	■	8	■	■	■	■	■	■	7	
UNDP	■	■	■	■	7	■	■	■	■	5	■	■	■	■	■	■	9	
WHO	■	■	■	■	7	■	■	■	■	4	■	■	■	■	■	■	6	
ILO	■	■	■	■	7	■	■	■	■	3	■	■	■	■	■	■	4	
UN RC	■	■	■	■	5	■	■	■	■	4	■	■	■	■	■	■	2	
UNFPA	■	■	■	■	4	■	■	■	■	2	■	■	■	■	■	■	10	
OHCHR	■	■	■	■	3	■	■	■	■	2	■	■	■	■	■	■	4	
UNESCO	■	■	■	■	2	■	■	■	■	5	■	■	■	■	■	■	5	
UN Women	■	■	■	■	1					0	■	■	■	■	■	■	7	
UN Habitat	■	■	■	■	1					0							0	
UNV	■	■	■	■	1					0	■	■	■	■	■	■	2	
UNESCAP	■	■	■	■	1					0							0	
WFP	■	■	■	■	1					0							0	
FAO	■	■	■	■	1					0							0	
UNIDO					0	■	■	■	■	1							0	
Egypt ICT TF					0	■	■	■	■	1							0	

UNICEF was documented to participate in more Convention Articles than other agencies across the UNPRPD programme, followed by UNDP. Of the 178 total project targets, UNICEF is affiliated with 104, and UNDP is participating in 92. The next most affiliated agencies are UNFPA and WHO. The ILO, UNESCO, Office of the Resident Coordinator (UN RC), UN Women, and OHCHR were all moderately affiliated with projects, ranging from 42-62 of the 178 project targets. Disability development crosscuts fields of expertise and supports the partnership approach of the UNPRPD; however it is important to explore how agency specialisation interacts with disability-inclusive development. While the programme aims to support projects based on local need, many of the project objectives align with UN specialisations (also see Figure 2). Further research is recommended to better understand the relationship between UN agency specialisation and the priorities receiving funding from UN programmes. The remaining agencies were affiliated with 15 or less project targets, often involved with just 1-2 country projects.

UN agency participation changed across funding rounds. This was especially noticeable with UN Women, going from one project affiliation in round 1 to seven projects in round 3, and was not listed in any of the round 2 projects. This trend in UN Women supports the data from CRPD Article 16 focusing on GBV, found only in round 3. Additionally, the lack of environmental project targets aligns with the lack of UN agency affiliation with an environmental specialisation. Finally, OHCHR was affiliated with 9 country projects of the 34 available in this part of the study. As technical expertise guides various UNPRPD interventions, stronger representation from the agency specialised in human rights instruments may further support implementation of the Convention in more diverse ways.

DISCUSSION

Despite global consensus around disability exclusion and the wide-ranging barriers to social inclusion, not all rights and priorities outlined in the CRPD and SDGs have been fully embraced – so far - within the UNPRPD country proposals selected to launch projects. There are trends in projects accepted for funding by the UNPRPD, whereby certain rights and goals are heavily supported, and others are absent from all three funding rounds. The lack of environmental targets outlined in project proposals supported by the UNPRPD programme parallels the acknowledged lack of data and lack of focus around these issues, as also found in other types of reviews (The Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2018; UNDESA, 2018). Environmental sustainability cannot be done without people with disability, and disability rights cannot be realised without access to a healthy planet. Thus this research recommends future calls for proposals to address environmental aspects that respect, protect, and fulfil related CRPD rights and that are closely linked with SDGs.

The data from the funded applications from 39 country projects suggests that thus far they have not been inclusive of all rights or goals. Approximately two-thirds of proposals focused on legislative reviews, capacity building and partnerships proposed by individual UNCTs. Having more project proposals originating from outside the UNCT, or in closer collaboration with local actors, may enhance the diversity of applications.

It is important to consider where disability is positioned in international development, particularly from a large programme such as the UNPRPD. The evidence from project proposals shows a pattern (20-30 data points) that focuses on SDG 10: reduced inequalities, SDG 16: peace, justice and strong institutions, and SDG 17: partnerships for the goals. Future calls for project proposals could address CRPD Article 28, adequate standard of living and social protection, with a focus on SDG 2: zero hunger, SDG 6: clean water and sanitation, and SDG 7: affordable and clean energy. Further research on project trajectories over time will shed light on patterns that evolve. The programme has introduced the stronger presence of UN Women, incorporating gender as a priority in the most recent funding round. However, participation of OPDs in the development and implementation of the projects should also be enhanced. A recent survey carried out by International Disability Alliance (2020) indicates that among OPDs in 13 out of the 25 countries where UNPRPD projects were operational, 60% of them were aware of the UNPRPD and 100% of those who were aware of them were consulted on the projects only to 'some extent'.

This paper has sought to report disability inclusion in development programming within the UNPRPD programme. The programme has many laudable achievements and it is understandable that certain Articles and goals should predominate during earlier project cycles. In the next stages of the programme it is suggested that focus can be given to some additional and emergent issues. For instance, how is the experience of disability a driver to achieving the global goals and rights-based programming? How can incorporating disability into environmental development facilitate greater progress towards implementing the CRPD and achieving the SDGs? How can development practices innovate new approaches to achieving disability inclusion beyond the established scope of specialised agencies? Further research and reflection will continue to support the pursuit of these questions; however this assessment hopes to offer some insight from one approach to disability development seen in the UNPRPD programme.

CONCLUSION

Disability inclusion is necessary to achieve the United Nations SDGs and the implementation of the CRPD. The UNPRPD supports a diverse range of projects spanning many of the Convention Articles and global goals. Increasing the scope of the programme will allow it to address areas of both instruments. This broader scope could be a feature of future funding calls within the programme. Future research should continue exploring the progress of disability rights as a result of the UNPRPD country projects, with a view towards full implementation of the CRPD and achievement of the SDGs. Such research may include an assessment of country need against the project priorities selected; project outcomes and impact; the role and extent of participation between the United Nations agencies, government and civil society- particularly Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs); how the results from country projects inform the evolution of the UNPRPD programme; and the power dynamics involved in project planning, trajectories and outcomes.

Limitations

The authors stress that the UNPRPD country project summaries are not a comprehensive account of the work done in each country and only represent the proposed priorities accepted for support by the programme. The data set used for analysis reflects only what was made available to them; it did not include rejected project proposals, or the criteria on which selections were made. Additionally,

the UNPRPD programme quite legitimately seeks to support project targets that address local needs (UNDP, 2016), which may not be captured in the CRPD Articles or SDGs, and so were not analysed in this study. Future research could include a similar analysis between the UNPRPD project objectives supported for implementation and the States Parties and alternative reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, list of issues and concluding observations. Such an analysis may provide further insight into the project selection process and the extent to which priorities are selected based on UN agency specialisation versus local need. The issuing of the call for project proposals only through UN channels may need to be reconsidered so that government and civil society are able to participate at the entry stage on an equal footing.

The project proposals used for this study were written and submitted before the inception phase and may not represent the objectives put into action. As projects were accepted and planning began between partnering entities, the stated objectives may have evolved. This limits the possible interpretation and meaning that can be derived from the project proposals. It may well be that projects continue to develop new objectives in subsequent funding rounds to build towards progressive realisation of the CRPD; that is not captured in the study results. Ongoing and detailed project summaries would provide new information to expand this analysis. Despite the acknowledged limitations of the data used in this study, it nonetheless serves as a preliminary snapshot from available information, to report on important development efforts underway to implement disability rights in diverse country contexts.

One important point to distinguish is the UNPRPD programme's stated goal of enabling the advancement of disability rights in line with the CRPD, and it does not claim to advance all rights evenly (UNDP, 2016). The project proposals all evidence the advancement of rights found in the CRPD, however they are concentrated by priority topics. The purpose of this research is to take a step back and look at the UNPRPD programme as one mechanism deployed to address the known barriers facing people with disability around the world, especially structural barriers. While the data used for this study cannot speak for the efficacy of actual project implementation, it does offer a critical analysis of the proposed objectives that got through to the funding stage. This reflection brings to light considerations for setting future objectives in disability development efforts, the procedures by which priorities are selected, and areas of disability rights that may benefit from more focused action.

Finally, while this paper seeks to report on the priorities set by different projects, there is awareness that these priorities occur within a deeper political context, power struggles within the UN, and broader political economy of international development efforts that impact the selected objectives for UNPRPD projects. Such topics are beyond the scope of the current paper, but are the focus of ongoing research (ALL Institute working paper, 2020).

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