



International Communication
Rights Alliance 

Call for Action to gain recognition of the comprehensive communication rights of persons with communication needs

Introduction

The International Communication Rights Alliance requests a hearing with the Committee of the UNCRPD to hear our call for greater recognition of clauses in the UNCRPD related to communication rights, and to propose that communication rights become a required reportable item for all signatories to the UNCRPD.

The International Communication Rights Alliance

The International Communication Rights Alliance was formed in 2020 to promote international and national awareness, entitlements and corresponding quality services for persons with communication needs. Members of the alliance include representatives from the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC), the International Communication Project (ICP), Deafblind International (DbI), and the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI).

Communication and persons with communication needs

The definition of 'communication needs' used by the International Communication Rights Alliance is based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (World Health Organisation, 2001). Specifically, the ICF component "body function and structure" which is also a key component of Walsh's (2015) model of communication well-being, will be used.

Communication is a relational concept. Participation and co-construction of meaning in effective two-way communication can be affected by impairment of body structure and function, but is also dependent on personal factors such as level of education and personality, and the environment which includes skills and attitudes of communication partners.

Communication rights and the CRPD

Communication rights are established in the UNCRPD. The Convention explicitly understands communication in a broad sense. According to the definitions in Article 2 communication “includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology”.

Underpinning all Articles of the Convention is the need for effective communication.

Call to Action

1. To take note of our position and to use it as guidance within the work of the CRPD committee.
2. Strongly encourage the inclusion of actions and strategies by States and the inclusion of corresponding disaggregated data in relation to people with comprehensive communication needs

31st January, 2022