

Women with disabilities Fact Sheet



About girls and women with disabilities

"Girls and women of all ages with any form of disability are generally among the more vulnerable and marginalized of society" (["Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action"](#), General Assembly Resolution S-23/3 of 10 June 2000, annex, paragraph 63).



Education

"Less than 5 per cent of children and young persons with disabilities have access to education and training; and girls and young women face significant barriers to participating in social life and development" ([Secretary-General of the United Nations in his report on the Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled, A/59/169](#), paragraph 79).

"The global literacy rate for adults with disabilities is as low as 3 per cent, and 1 per cent for women with disabilities, according to a 1998 UNDP study" ([UN DPI fact sheet](#))



Employment and paid work

"People with disabilities in general face difficulties in entering the open labour market, but, seen from a gender perspective, men with disabilities are almost twice as likely to have jobs than women with disabilities. When women with disabilities work, they often experience unequal hiring and promotion standards, unequal access to training and retraining, unequal access to credit and other productive resources, unequal pay for equal work and occupational segregation, and they rarely participate in economic decision-making" ([Arthur O'Reilly. "Employment Barriers for Women with Disabilities" in "The Right to Decent Work of Persons with Disabilities" IFP/Skills Working Paper No. 14. International Labour Organization 2003](#)).



Health

"Every minute, more than 30 women are seriously injured or disabled during labor... However, those 15 – 50 million women generally go unnoticed" ([World Bank, "Health, nutrition and population: Reproductive health and disability"](#)).

"Women with disabilities, of all ages, often have difficulty with physical access to health services. Women with mental disabilities are particularly vulnerable, while there is limited understanding, in general, of the broad range of risks to mental health to which women are disproportionately susceptible as a result of gender discrimination, violence, poverty, armed conflict, dislocation and other forms of social deprivation" ([Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women General Recommendation 24 Women and Health, in relation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(Article 12\) \(Twentieth session, 1999, paragraph 25\)](#)).

"Depressive disorders account for close to 41.9 per cent of the disability from neuropsychiatric disorders among women compared to 29.3 per cent among men" ([Women's mental health: The Facts, World Health Organization](#))



Housing

"Women with disabilities face significant barriers in accessing adequate housing and services" ([Study by Miloon Kothari, Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, "Women and adequate housing", E/CN.4/2005/43, paragraph 64](#)).

"Women with disabilities are ... more likely institutionalized than men with disabilities" ([Study by Miloon Kothari, Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, "Women and adequate housing", E/CN.4/2005/43, paragraph 64](#)).

Produced for **WomenWatch**, the United Nations Internet Gateway on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. The fact sheet is available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/enable>