

# Guidelines for Disability Inclusive Communication

## SUMMARY

### Language: The five general principles

#### 1. *Use people first language*

People-first language emphasizes the person, not the disability.

Example: children with albinism.

#### 2. *Avoid labels and stereotypes*

Disability is a part of life and of human diversity, not something to be dramatized or sensationalized.

#### 3. *Do not use condescending euphemisms*

Euphemisms are, in fact, a denial of reality and a way to avoid talking about disabilities.

#### 4. *Disability is not an illness or a problem*

Expressions such as 'suffers from' and 'afflicted with' are inappropriate.

#### 5. *Use proper language in speech*

Most persons with disabilities are comfortable with the words used in daily life.

### When writing stories: always consider who is your reader!

- Ask and check: consult persons with disabilities and actively include them
- Give attention to the roles that persons with disabilities play in society
- Be conscious of intersectional discrimination. Explain the diversity of persons with disabilities and their experiences
- Focus on the person and the purpose of the story.
- Use validating language around lived experience
- Ask a few people who represent your target audience to proofread your text

### Visuals: pictures should promote the human rights and dignity of people in the images

The main criteria are:

#### 1. *People with disabilities at the centre*

Persons of all genders, and from the countries where our programme is being implemented

#### 2. *Preferably use action pictures*

Portraying persons with disabilities in active roles, rather than passive

#### 3. *Don't use the 'vulnerability' of people with disabilities as a way to get our message across*

Don't use pictures where they're suffering, being excluded or victimised

#### 4. *Highlight accommodations and/or accessible technology*

Show accessibility 'in action' and what society can do to enable persons with disabilities to participate more fully.

#### 5. *Avoid pictures that reinforce stereotypes depicting persons with disabilities*

The full document with more detailed instructions can be found at: [www.weareable.ngo](http://www.weareable.ngo)

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