

What do we want to do?

We want to make sure that:

- People know communication is a human right.
- Governments know that communication is a human right
- Governments understand what people with communication difficulties need
- Governments have national programs to meet these needs

Introduction

The United Nations have written an important document about rights for people with disability. It is called the Convention on the Rights of People with Disability (2006). It talks about what people with disability need, to be equal. We will call this the Convention for short. All governments were asked to sign this document to say they will do what is written.

Governments who signed the Convention must send a report to a special committee every four years. They must say what they are doing for people with disability. The committee makes sure governments are doing what they say. The committee tells them where they need to improve.

The Convention tells governments very clearly what people with communication difficulties need to be equal. .

The International Communication Rights Alliance (ICRA) wants governments to start programs to make things better for people with communication needs.

ICRA wants government to write about what they are doing for people with communication needs. They can do this in reports they send to the committee.

What is the International Communication Rights Alliance (ICRA)?

The ICRA started in 2020.

ICRA speaks for all people with communication needs.

Members of ICRA are from international organisations.

Examples of these organisations are:

- International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC),
- International Communication Project (ICP),
- Deafblind International (DbI), and the
- International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI).

ICRA started because governments are not doing enough for people with communication needs. ICRA wants governments to:

- Take note of the people who have communication needs
- Understand what communication needs are and what they need to do
- Understand what tools and devices people need
- Make services better
- Run programs so people have a positive attitude to people with communication needs

What do we mean by people with communication needs?

The ability to communicate depends on things:

- inside the person's body
- outside of the person's body. [1]

People with communication needs have difficulties with all or some of these things.

Inside the person's body: People with communication needs may have-

- physical disabilities
- difficulty in the way their muscles work
- problems with brain function

Outside the person's body: People with communication needs have-

- different opportunities for education
- people around them with different attitudes and skills
- different personalities that can help them, or hold them back.

Communication rights and the Convention on the Rights of People with Disability

The Convention talks about communication in Article 2. It lists all the things that are part of communication, such as:

- different languages,
- what words look like
- braille
- tactile communication
- large print
- accessible multimedia such as television, with captions or sign language interpreters
- written language that is easy to read, audio options for written information , plain-language,
- human-reader
- augmentative and alternative modes, such as pictures, Key Word Sign
- communication technology, such as devices or iPads with speaking Apps.

Call for Action- What we want the Committee to do

The ICRA wants the committee to:

- take note of what we have said to guide the CRPD committee work
- encourage governments to take actions that improve lives of people with communication needs.
- collect information about people with communication needs. For example:

a. how many people are there in your country with different communication needs?

b. How much funding do they get?

c. How many trained staff do you have?

d. How many facilities and schools do you have?

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1. The ICRA uses "body function and structure" to talk about communication needs. This is from a document called International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (World Health Organisation, 2001)