

**The Assistant Director-General
For Priority Africa and External Relations a.i.**

To all Permanent Delegations
and Observers to UNESCO

To all National Commissions
for UNESCO

6 November 2025

Ref: CI/FMD/MDE/2025/IKB/05

Dear Madam/Sir,

Diversity in the media is not just a question of fair representation; it reflects whose stories are told, whose voices are heard and whose realities are recognised. When certain communities are not adequately represented in media production and portrayal, it can unintentionally reinforce stereotypes, limit perspectives, and reduce the full potential of communication to inspire understanding and inclusion.

People with disabilities make up 16% of the global population, yet they remain among the most underrepresented and often excluded audiences in media operations and coverage. Including them is not only vital to advancing the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), but also unlocks vast potential for creativity, innovation and audience engagement within the media industry. The UNESCO Global Outlook on Racism and Discrimination (2024) reports that 20% of intersectional discrimination cases involve persons with disabilities. With one in six people globally—nearly 80% in developing countries—living with a disability, the report underscores persistent ableism across education, employment, media and digital environments.

As the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December) draws near, many media organizations are beginning to shape their programming and coverage. This provides an ideal moment to share resources that can strengthen reporting and ensure more inclusive representation. I am pleased to introduce UNESCO's Practical Manual on Disability Equality in the Media, available in eight languages: Arabic, English, French, Khmer, Mongolian, Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian. To complement the manual, UNESCO has also developed a Master Class series consisting of thirteen video modules, with sign language interpretation available in English and Mongolian. These resources are already widely used by our field offices to support capacity building in the media sector. They can serve as a valuable tool for media professionals seeking to enrich their work in the lead-up to 3 December and beyond.

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The Practical Manual offers media organisations concrete guidance on developing equitable editorial policies, producing accessible information and media content, and adopting inclusive management practices. It also serves as a self-assessment tool for reporters, editors, producers, technical staff, and managers, offering practical annexes with checklists, case studies, visual guides, and references for further study. This resource also offers hands-on recommendations on inclusive language, interviewing techniques, crisis reporting, accessible media production and workplace diversity. Designed for media professionals of all levels, the manual promotes fair and accurate coverage of disabled people, encourages inclusive working environments, and shows how embracing diversity can drive media growth and innovation.

UNESCO also conducts the Master Class Series against Racism and Discriminations which empowers students to become youth champions in their schools and communities by providing them with the keys and tools to understand the concepts and scientific evidence to understand attitudes and behavior leading to discrimination. Disability inclusion is one of the themes tackled in the Master Class Series.

In preparation for the upcoming International Day of Persons with Disabilities, I encourage you to share UNESCO's Practical Manual and Global Outlook, as well as the accompanying Master Class series with media organisations and professionals in your country. These resources can support the production of accurate, relevant content and help advance inclusive management policies that promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the media.

Both the [UNESCO Practical Manual on Disability Equality in the Media](#) (2024) and the [UNESCO Global Outlook on Racism and Discrimination](#) (2024) are available via the UNESCO Digital Library. The following links provide access to the [Master Class Series on Disability Equality](#) and [Master Class Series against Racism and Discrimination](#).

If you require any additional information, please contact Ms Irmgarda Kasinskaite-Buddeberg (tel.: +33 1 45 68 16 45; e-mail: i.kasinskaite@unesco.org), Advisor for Communication and Information, Communication and Information Sector.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Xing Qu', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Xing Qu