



23 January 2023 – On the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the WHO Country Office in Bahrain and UN-Habitat in Bahrain jointly hosted Public Spaces for All; an event to highlight the importance of mainstreaming disability-inclusion opportunities across our societies, in solidarity with the UN sentiment: ‘Nothing About Us Without Us’.

Addressing the key role accessibly public spaces play in improving physical activity and social inclusion, Public Spaces for All was held together with 6x key national counterparts, under the patronage of the Supreme Health Council, and with the support of the Ministries of Health, Social Development, Municipalities, Works and Sustainable Development. The celebration aimed at raising awareness by bringing together government, private sector and community members at an accessible public park, supporting inclusivity in all policies, planning and participation, with public spaces developing transformative action towards ensuring that "no one is left behind".



“Through this event, on the International Day of People with Disabilities, reiterating global advocacy, proactive engagement and equity for all we hope to build a platform for people, in all their diversity, to voice their stories, and where social determinants of health can be integrated within the very fabric of well-being related health systems. Bahrain’s strides in implementing accessible spaces within the country’s infrastructure provide evidence of a realization to make healthy public environments accessible to all. We are here today to recognize the influence of community engagement in welcoming catalysts for change, where equally accessible

environments can be made a reality, ultimately inspiring the inclusive message of Health For All By All,” said Dr Tasnim Atatrah, WHO Representative in Bahrain.

Public spaces play a vital role in enabling physical activity and opportunities for social inclusion. Equitable access to safe public spaces becomes especially crucial when addressing persons with disabilities, as individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities have been found to show significantly higher prevalence rates for most chronic diseases.

The Public Spaces for All objectives include:

raising awareness among policy-makers and the general public on the positive impact on health and well-being that access to disability-inclusive public spaces creates for persons with disabilities;

highlighting the importance of social inclusion through public spaces to policy makers and general public;

promoting and creating equal opportunities for persons with disabilities to engage in meaningful participation.

In alignment with the international convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, and in addressing social determinants of health across the life course, the activity played advocate for inclusive opportunities for all persons with disabilities, while promoting inclusive means for providing positive impact on health and well-being. The initiative also ensured diverse representation, upholding the UN principles of gender equality and meaningful youth participation.

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