

CHAPTER 14: THE RIGHT TO SPORT AND CULTURE

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Article 30, Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport:

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities:
 - a. Enjoy access to cultural materials in accessible formats;
 - b. Enjoy access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, in accessible formats;
 - c. Enjoy access to places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, and, as far as possible, enjoy access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance.
2. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to enable persons with disabilities to have the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, not only for their own benefit, but also for the enrichment of society.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate steps, in accordance with international law, to ensure that laws protecting intellectual property rights do not constitute an unreasonable or discriminatory barrier to access by persons with disabilities to cultural materials.
4. Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture.
5. With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:
 - a. To encourage and promote the participation, to the fullest extent possible, of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels;
 - b. To ensure that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to organize, develop and participate in disability-specific sporting and recreational activities and, to this end, encourage the provision, on an equal basis with others, of appropriate instruction, training and resources;
 - c. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sporting, recreational and tourism venues;
 - d. To ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system;
 - e. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to services from those involved in the organization of recreational, tourism, leisure and sporting activities.

OBJECTIVES

The background information and exercises contained in this chapter will enable participants to work towards the following objectives:

- Define the right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport
- Explain the importance of participation in culture and sport for people with disabilities
- Understand the interrelation between participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport and other human rights
- Identify ways in which the rights of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport have been promoted or denied
- Understand the provisions on cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport in the UN **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**.

GETTING STARTED: THINKING ABOUT PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL LIFE, RECREATION, LEISURE, AND SPORT

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport are all essential components of being a part of one's community. Unfortunately, people with disabilities have often been denied the right to participate in the wide array of cultural, recreational, sporting and leisure opportunities that the rest of society takes for granted. And all too often, children with disabilities are denied their right to play.

Discrimination in the area of cultural life is a global phenomenon that takes on many forms. Cultural venues are all too often inaccessible to persons with disabilities, denying them their right to participate in cultural life as direct participants and as spectators. Even the most basic activities that should be readily open to all people in a community are often unavailable to disabled community members. For example, people who use wheelchairs are sometimes denied entry to movie theaters on the basis that their wheelchairs present a fire hazard for other participants. Tourism facilities around the world are full of barriers that restrict movement or prevent access altogether. Hotels have few, if any, accessible rooms and do not provide accessible signage to persons with visual impairments. Tour buses are rarely able to accommodate wheelchair users. Restaurants have been known to refuse to serve persons with intellectual disabilities and throughout the world are notoriously inaccessible to persons with physical disabilities. Television programming and other technology allowing people to access culture and sport is not made accessible for deaf persons.

Around the world, people with disabilities experience discrimination and exclusion from active participation in sport, recreation, and leisure activities. Social and communication barriers prevent disabled persons from participating as athletes and as spectators because of attitudes and lack of access to information about sporting opportunities. Physical barriers prevent disabled persons from accessing sporting facilities and venues. Legal and policy barriers may also lead to exclusion. For example, many universities and schools do not have policies of inclusion for allowing students with disabilities to participate in sport, and coaches have no idea how to adapt sport for athletes with disabilities.



Children with disabilities often face numerous barriers in accessing their rights to sport, recreation and play. Save the Children has documented the particular challenges that children with disabilities face in this regard. At the same time, many disability organizations have successfully worked to open up opportunities for disabled children through the development of adaptive physical education programming in schools or community-based efforts to build accessible playgrounds.

Disabled peoples organizations worldwide are working to promote their meaningful participation in cultural life, sport, recreation, and leisure activities, which directly affects their enjoyment of all other human rights. For example, being denied the right to participate in sport in your school may directly impact the right to health. The right to participate in cultural activities is closely related to the right to access information; if information on cultural events is not provided in accessible formats, then one is effectively denied participation in that event. Increasingly, sport and cultural programming is seen as an important tool for peace building, social mobilization, and the support of public health initiatives, such as HIV/AIDS education or polio immunization campaigns. The exclusion of disabled persons from such activities impacts their rights to social and political participation, as well as health and education. These examples demonstrate how human rights are **indivisible, interdependent, and interconnected**.

Examples of Barriers to Cultural Life, Sport and Recreation for Disabled Persons

- Attitudes about the ability of people with disabilities to participate meaningfully in cultural life, sport, and recreation both as participants and as spectators.
- Physical barriers to museums, theaters, music halls, spectator sporting venues, parks, sporting centers, and other cultural and recreational buildings and facilities.
- Lack of accessible transportation to cultural sites and sporting events.
- Lack of accessible information about cultural events and sporting opportunities, including events for persons with disabilities.
- Lack of accommodations to facilitate communication by people with disabilities.
- Lack of knowledge and understanding about sign language as a distinct language/linguistic identity for many deaf and deafblind people.
- Lack of training for those involved in the organization of recreational, tourism, leisure, and sporting activities, as well as cultural activities, to understand the specific needs of people with disabilities and how to provide necessary accommodations.
- Lack of knowledge and experience about how to include children with disabilities in sport and recreation and how to develop adaptive physical education in schools and design accessible playgrounds and equipment.

EXERCISE 14.1: Barriers to Participation in Cultural Life, Recreation, Sport, and Leisure

Objective: To identify barriers to participation in cultural life, recreation, sport, and leisure faced by people with disabilities

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Chart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk

1. Analyze:

Ask each participant (or pair of participants) to select a specific area covered by Article 30 (e.g., particular types of cultural activities, language/linguistic identity, sport, recreation, leisure, play) and to evaluate the barriers a disabled person might face in achieving full participation in the selected context. Encourage participants to think of a scenario in which their issue is reflected, perhaps drawing from their personal experience.

2. Role Play:

Ask each participant or pair to report on their analysis and to role play at least one of the barriers a disabled person would face in fulfilling this role.

3. Discuss:

What are the consequences when people with disabilities are excluded from full participation in cultural life, recreation, sport, leisure and related areas? What are the consequences for the community? For the person with a disability? For society as a whole?

- Which barriers have the greatest effect on people with disabilities? On the community? On society as a whole?
- What can be done to eliminate these most significant barriers to full participation? List these.

4. Develop:

As a whole group, develop a fact sheet or checklist for inclusion on one or more topics. For example, the group may wish to draft a list of the benefits of inclusion for a specific issue area (e.g., inclusion in sport, inclusion in tourism) that includes concrete solutions on how to accommodate people with disabilities in a specific area. Another option is to draft a list of tips for including and accommodating people with disabilities in culture or sport. These tools may then be used in disability rights advocacy and awareness-raising on a particular topic. Encourage participants to distribute their list to their target audience (e.g., local community, sport center, or tourism authority).

WHAT DOES HUMAN RIGHTS LAW SAY ABOUT PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL LIFE, RECREATION, LEISURE AND SPORT?

The rights to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport are reflected in a number of international human rights law instruments, including, for example, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) and the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR).¹ Specialized conventions also reflect these rights, including the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women** (CEDAW) which affirms the right of women to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects

¹ See http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm



of cultural life.² The **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC) recognizes the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.³

While reflected in various human rights instruments, these rights are not as well-developed as other human rights and are often forgotten. The right of persons with disabilities to participate in a wide array of cultural, recreational, sporting, and leisure activities is recognized as central to full inclusion for disabled people and is therefore defined in some detail in Article 30 of the CRPD. For this reason the CRPD is an important development in human rights law on participation in culture, sport, recreation and related activities.

Article 30 of the CRPD recognizes:

- The duty of States to take measures to support access to places where cultural performances or services take place. This includes, for example, theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services. It also includes, as far as possible, access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance.
- The right of people with disabilities to develop and practice their creative, artistic, and intellectual potential for both individual and societal benefit. This recognizes that people with disabilities are full participants in the cultural life of their communities as, for example, artists, musicians, scholars and actors.
- The duty of States to ensure that laws protecting intellectual property rights do not present unreasonable or discriminatory barriers in access to cultural materials by persons with disabilities. This would cover, for example, translating books and other material into Braille, providing audio cassettes or providing sign language or forms of accessible technology for artistic performances.
- The right of disabled persons to equal recognition and support of their cultural and linguistic identity. This includes, for example, the right to use sign languages and recognition and support of Deaf culture. The CRPD therefore recognizes that people who are part of Deaf culture use sign language as their primary language and see themselves not as disabled, but as members of a cultural or language minority.
- The duty of States to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities. This approach favors an inclusive approach to programming, where people with disabilities have equal access to sport and recreational facilities (such as equal access to swimming pools and adaptive playgrounds) and have opportunities for participation in both disability-specific sport and recreation (such as wheelchair basketball) and mainstream sport programming.
- The rights of persons with disabilities to organize, develop, and participate in sport and recreation with other persons with disabilities, including activities organized specifically for persons with disabilities. This covers both mainstream as well as disability-specific sport.

² See <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw>

³ See <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>

- The duty of States to take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities are included as recipients of services and programming by those who organize recreational, tourism, leisure, and sporting activities.
- The right of persons with disabilities to access and to use sporting, recreational and tourism facilities. This would include sport arenas, community pools, museums, cinemas, hotels, and other facilities.
- The right of children with disabilities to play and to participate in recreation, leisure and sporting activities in the school system. This also includes access to playgrounds in the community and adaptive physical education in schools.

In summary, States have the obligation to **respect, protect and fulfill** the rights of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure, sport, and play. In meeting their obligation to *respect* the rights of people with disabilities. States must refrain from limiting or interfering with the access of people with disabilities to exercise their rights to access sporting and recreational venues, use their own language, such as sign language, and otherwise participate in cultural activities. States must also refrain from enforcing discriminatory practices as State policy and must not impose discriminatory practices relating to cultural life, such as restricting or limiting the use of sign language. Obligations to *protect* include, among other things, the duties of States to adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures to facilitate the enjoyment of cultural, recreation, sporting, and leisure rights. Examples include providing sign language interpretation for a cultural event or building public sporting arenas without physical barriers. Finally, the obligation to *fulfill* requires States to, among other things, undertake measures to fully implement rights. States Parties to CRPD must, for example, ensure the appropriate training of those involved in the organization of recreation, tourism, leisure, and sporting opportunities.

Disability and the Arts: Principles for Inclusion

- Every young person with a disability deserves access to high quality arts learning experiences;
- All art educators should be prepared to include students with disabilities in their instruction;
- All children, youth, and adults with disabilities should have complete access to cultural facilities and activities;
- All individuals with disabilities who aspire to careers in the arts should have the opportunity to develop appropriate skills.⁴

⁴ "Access and Opportunities: A Guide to Disability Awareness." VSA Arts. <http://www.vsarts.org>



EXERCISE 14.2: What Rights to Participate in Cultural Life, Recreation, Sport, and Leisure Does the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Affirm?

Objective: To review and understand the right to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport in the CRPD

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Chart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk

1. Review:

Divide the participants into small groups. Ask each group to work together to paraphrase Article 30 in common language and give some examples of how the rights in the provision could be enjoyed and make a difference for people with disabilities in their community. Since Article 30 is rather long, you may want to divide different parts among the groups.

2. Paraphrase:

Read Article 30 aloud. Pause at each comma or paragraph to ask different groups for their paraphrase. Discuss the meaning of the section until everyone can agree on a paraphrase. Write the final paraphrase of Article 30 on chart paper.

3. Give examples:

Ask for examples of how that right could be enjoyed and make a difference for people with disabilities.

4. Discuss:

How can Article 30 of the CRPD be used to set national disability rights agendas and formulate platforms of action for submission to political parties or government decision-makers? What organizations at the community, national and international levels might support these rights (Consider both governmental as well as non-governmental bodies).

THE RIGHTS TO CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC IDENTITY

All people have the right to participate in the cultural life of their community without facing harassment or coercion. Thus, people with disabilities should not, as they often are, be restricted from the practice of their own culture, nor should they be prohibited from participating in the cultural life of their community. International human rights law recognizes the rights of linguistic minorities to use and develop their own languages and cultures, and also to access language education so that they may attain fluency in additional “official” or “national” languages.

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR)⁵ recognizes the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of one’s language (Article 2) and other international instruments affirm this right, including the **Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National, or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities**.⁶ Such protections are of great relevance to those people with disabilities who utilize sign language, Braille, or other modes and means of communication.

5 See <http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm>

6 See http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_minori.htm

The inclusion in CRPD of language specifically recognizing the right of people with disabilities to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture, is an important development in human rights law. Deaf advocates at the UN Disability Convention negotiations worked hard to ensure such recognition and emphasized to governments that members of deaf culture use the term “Deaf” (often in print the term is capitalized when used as a cultural marker of identity) as a way of describing their cultural identity and affiliation much more than as a term that expresses their hearing status. The right of persons with disabilities to use sign language and to affiliate with a particular cultural identity is therefore a major advance. It is also a clear recognition of the discrimination that many people with disabilities have experienced in using sign language and other modes and means of communication in their communities.

EXERCISE 14.3: What are the Cultural Rituals in Your Community?

Objective: To consider the cultural rituals within the family or community and barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing their right to participate in culture

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Chart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk

1. Brainstorm/Discuss/Report:

Ask participants to brainstorm in small groups:

- What are the rituals in your culture that mark the important events in a person’s life (e.g., birth, coming of age, marriage, death) or the seasons of the year (e.g., religious holidays, national holidays)? List these.
- What is the value and importance of these rituals to the individual? To the family? To the community or society as a whole?

2. Analyze:

Ask each group to report back on their findings and combine the lists.

Discuss among the whole group:

- Are people with disabilities welcome or permitted to participate in these rituals? If not, why not?
- How does exclusion impact people with disabilities personally?
- How does exclusion impact their ability to participate as full members in society?

3. Strategize:

Ask the group to consider ways of addressing discrimination in relation to participation in these cultural rituals.

- How might these barriers be challenged: (i) within the family; (ii) within the community?



SPORT AS A HUMAN RIGHT

The 1982 **World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons**⁷ stressed that governments should encourage sport activities of disabled persons by providing facilities and organizations. The 1993 **Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities**⁸ provide detailed guidance on making sport and recreation accessible to people with disabilities. Rule 11 emphasizes that States should take measures to make sport facilities accessible and that sports organizations should be encouraged to develop opportunities for participation by persons with disabilities in sports activities, both through accessibility measures that open up opportunities for participation and, where appropriate, through developing disability-specific programming. Rule 11 also promotes the concept of people with disabilities participating in national and international events. Rule 11 stresses that persons with disabilities participating in sports activities should have access to instruction and training of the same quality as other participants. Most important, Rule 11 underscores the importance of consultations with disabled peoples organizations by organizers of sports and recreation in the development of their services.

Building upon these earlier efforts, the **CRPD** supports the right of people with disabilities to participate in both mainstream and disability-specific sporting activities. Inclusion recognizes the role of mainstream sports organizations and institutions in delivering disability sport programs and services to persons with disabilities and in providing accommodations to make programs and services accessible. *Disability sport* refers to sport organized specifically for persons with disabilities to provide equitable and fair categories, based on disability and ability, in order to even the playing field. Disability sport may therefore be regarded as a category of sport, such as women's sport.

For many years disability advocates have been promoting the participation of people with disabilities in sport and recreational activities. The Paralympics are an example of disability sport at the highest levels of sporting competition. Other international disability-specific initiatives include the Deaf Games, organized by the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf, and the Special Olympics, a worldwide movement to provide competitive sport and recreational opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities. However, there are numerous examples of community-based sporting opportunities, often organized by disabled peoples organizations, to promote inclusion in mainstream sport or to promote disability-specific programming. A recent report issued by the UN **Special Rapporteur** on Disabilities noted that in many countries around the world, athletes with disabilities are a great source of national pride and that opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in sport at the community level were on the rise.⁹ An interesting example of effective advocacy to promote disability inclusion in sport is the initiative sponsored by the Australian Sports Commission (See text box on following page).

7 See <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/diswpa00.htm>

8 See <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/dissre00.htm>

9 UN Special Rapporteur on Disabilities, Global Survey on Government Action on the Implementation of the Standard Rules (Doha: 2006).

Disability Sport in Australia: Project CONNECT

Project CONNECT is a national initiative of the Australian Sports Commission and a transition program designed to provide national sporting associations with assistance in meeting the needs of people with disabilities. The program addresses sport for people with disabilities at all levels, from grassroots to elite competition. It aims to create athletic opportunities for people with disabilities and to break down barriers within disability and non-disability sport structures. The program forms partnerships at national, state, and local levels to address the full range of issues that impact participation of people with disabilities in sport. A core part of the initiative is the development and implementation of Disability Action Plans for participating national sport organizations, which forms the basis of the range of support services provided through Project Connect:

- Disability Action Plan negotiated between Project CONNECT and national sporting organizations
- Strategies in Plans outline agreed outcomes, time frames, and evaluation methods
- Funding assistance is provided to the national sporting organization for realization of the strategies
- Disability Action Plans must ensure that strategies to develop the sport by the national sport organization will create opportunities at all levels. Disability Action Plan is registered with the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

The Disability Standards for Sport, endorsed by the Australian Sports Commission, provide a framework for assessing outcomes:

- **Development:** Sports organizations must develop their sport in a manner that attracts and retains peoples with disabilities in a variety of roles within sport (e.g., as volunteer, spectator, administrator, player, coach and/or official);
- **Participation:** Sports organizations must ensure that people with disabilities are provided with opportunities to participate in disability and non-disability specific sport;
- **Competition:** Sports organizations must ensure that competition opportunities exist for athletes with disabilities in disability and non-disability specific sport.

Project CONNECT has brought about the filing of Disability Action Plans by a wide variety of national sport organizations covering the following sports: athletics, basketball, swimming, tennis, tenpin bowling, yachting, baseball, softball, surfing, table tennis, cricket, golf, bowls, and riding.¹⁰

¹⁰ Australian Sport Commission, Disability Sport Unit, Project CONNECT.
<http://www.ausport.gov.au/connect/index.asp>



EXERCISE 14.4: What is an Athlete?

Objective: To consider the attributes of athletes and the barriers that athletes with disabilities face in accessing their right to participate in sport

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Chart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk

1. Brainstorm/Discuss:

Ask participants to brainstorm

- What are the general attributes of an athlete?
- What words or phrases come to mind in thinking about an athlete?

Next, ask participants to think about an athlete with a disability. Record responses on chart paper.

- What do you think about when you think about an athlete with a disability?
- What words come to mind?

2. Analyze:

- How are the responses different?
- How are they the same?
- Does anything about these two lists surprise you?

3. Discuss:

- Are there athletes with disabilities in your community?
- If so, what kinds of sports do they engage in?
- If not, why not?
- What organizations at the community, national, and international levels might support the rights of athletes with disabilities? (Consider both governmental as well as non-governmental bodies).

Variation: This exercise may be easily adapted to address artists, musicians and other participants in cultural life, sport and recreation.

Source: Adapted from material by Eli Wolff, Northeastern Center for Sport and Society.

Case Law: Addressing Discrimination in Professional Golf

In 2001, the United States Supreme Court reached a decision in *P.G.A. Tour v. Martin*, a case involving Casey Martin, a professional golfer with a disability who had requested accommodation in the form of permission to ride a golf cart in tournaments of the Professional Golfer's Association (PGA). Martin's disability was due to a disease affecting the blood flow in one of his legs which caused extreme pain and fatigue, which was made worse by walking. The Supreme Court ruled that the PGA Tour is a place of public accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Accordingly, the PGA, as an operator of golf courses, must not discriminate against any player in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, advantages or accommodations of those courses. Since the PGA Tour is a place of public accommodation, the Court decided that the PGA had to accommodate Martin unless to do so would fundamentally alter the nature of the event. The Court held that providing Martin with a golf cart would not fundamentally alter the nature of the event because the fundamental nature of golf is shot making.¹¹

TOURISM

Tourism is the largest industry in the world. In the United States alone some 42 million travelers with disabilities take 31.7 million trips per year. They spend \$13.6 billion annually, including \$3.3 billion on airfare, \$4.2 billion on hotel accommodations, and \$2.7 billion on food and beverage.¹² Responsible tourism development and tourism that respects the human rights of persons with disabilities must consider inclusion in planning, designing, and implementing tourism projects. Most important, disabled peoples organizations must participate in such processes and need to engage in accessible tourism advocacy. The CRPD, which is the only major international human rights treaty to explicitly mention tourism, requires States to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to tourism and tourist services.

11 *P.G.A. Tour, Inc. v. Martin*, 532 U.S. 661, 121 S. Ct 1879 (2001)

12 Rains, Scott Paul. "The Global Reach of Accessible Tourism." 16 May 2005. *suite101.com*. http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/travel_with_disabilities/115976/3



Barriers Faced by Tourists with Disabilities

- Inaccessible airport transfer and ill-trained airport staff.
- Lack of accessible transport.
- Inaccessible hotel rooms.
- Professional staff not trained to inform and advise about accessibility issues.
- Lack of information about a specific attraction's accessibility (e.g., museums, castles, exhibitions).
- Non-adapted toilets in restaurants and public places.
- Inaccessible restaurants and tourist attractions.
- Inaccessible streets (e.g., no curb cuts, cars blocking wheelchair access lanes).
- Lack of disability equipment rental (wheelchairs, bath chairs, toilet raisers, electric scooters).

EXERCISE 14.5: Speaking Up for Accessible Tourism

Objective: To examine discrimination in tourism and tourism development and to consider how to take action against it

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Chart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk

1. List:

Ask participants what they consider are the main problems of discrimination or barriers in tourism for persons with disabilities. List these.

2. Plan:

Divide participants into small groups. Ask each group to choose a problem from the list that they would like to focus on. Give these instructions:

- Plan a five-minute presentation to a mock “Tourism Development Board” that includes officials, representatives of the tourist industry, and members of the public;
- Choose a spokesperson for your presentation and someone to serve on the “Tourism Development Board.”;
- While the groups plan presentations, each member of the “Tourism Development Board” meets to decide on their roles. (These roles should reflect the attitudes, both positive and negative, found in the community);
- Presentations should:
 - Describe the discrimination, including whom it affects and, if possible, its cause(s);
 - Relate the discrimination to a human right in the CRPD;
 - Describe the effects of discrimination on the lives of people with disabilities;
 - Describe how addressing the problem can improve the lives of persons with disabilities, and of people generally;
 - Propose next steps or specific actions that can be taken to address the problem.

3. Role Play/Discuss:

Have the spokesperson from each group make a presentation to the "Tourism Development Board". Encourage members of the "Board" to respond. Debrief each presentation by asking for questions, comments, objections, or suggestions from the larger group.

4. Conclude:

Debrief the exercise by asking questions like these:

- How did the spokesperson feel when presenting the problem?
- How did the "Board" react? What attitudes and barriers were represented?
- Were the problems human rights issues?
- Was the tactic for addressing the problem feasible in your community? Why or why not?
- What would be the next step be in real-life for addressing this problem?

DISABILITY ADVOCACY AND TOURISM

There is a large and growing movement within disability activism to promote accessible tourism. Many innovative and successful strategies have resulted in opening tourism to persons with disabilities:

- In Perth, Western Australia, a program called "Beyond Accessibility" requires the hotels to use from 10% to 15% of the profit they earn from the conventions brought to them by the Convention Bureau to enhance hotel accessibility.
- In Australia's state of Tasmania, a tourism group purchased several properties throughout the seven tourist regions of the island. Each location is fully wheelchair accessible. A bus with a lift for wheelchair is made available to tourists for travel throughout the region and, as a result, the entire island is open to travelers with disabilities.
- In the Canary Islands, disability advocates have improved access to services for Canary Island residents with disabilities by consulting with the tourism industry, developing an accessibility directory for Tenerife and a sophisticated online resource offering tourism information for travelers with disabilities.
- Architects and their students from the Rhode Island School of Design are combining environmentally sensitive, "green" construction methods and building materials with accessibility concepts to develop an accessible eco-lodge in the US Virgin Islands. The resort, known as Concordia Estates, allows people with disabilities close access to unspoiled nature. Tourist hotels in Hawaii have also shown some initiative, not only in providing guests with comfortable accessible rooms, but also in advising them on accessible places for food and entertainment and arranging for the rental of specialized beach wheelchairs to make the beach truly accessible for all.¹³
- In Costa Rica, disabled advocates worked with government officials to develop an accessibility protocol to enhance access to the wonders of the rainforest. (See text box)

What is clear is that without the initiative of disability advocates, the goal of tourism for all will not be realized.

13 Rains, Scott Paul. "The Global Reach of Accessible Tourism." 16 May 2005. *suite101.com*. http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/travel_with_disabilities/115976/3



Access to National Parks in Costa Rica

In Costa Rica, a successful example of inclusive planning for national parks development resulted in the design and implementation of an *Accessibility Protocol for Persons with Disabilities in Protected Wildlife Areas*, based on extensive research and participation by the disability community. Disability groups, in partnership with the responsible ministry, worked to identify barriers to access in protected areas, trained park personnel on access issues, and drafted and implemented an accessibility plan. The project was overseen by the Ministry of the Environment and Energy, which established an Institutional Commission on Disability and an internal disability policy, as called for in domestic disability legislation.¹⁴

EXERCISE 14.5: Making a Commitment to Promote Participation in Cultural Life, Recreation, Sport, and Leisure for People with Disabilities

- Emphasize that human rights involve both rights and responsibilities;
- Ask if after learning about the human right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life, recreation, sport and leisure, the group is ready to think about taking concrete action;
- Acknowledge that, although there is still much planning and information gathering to do, commitment to creating change is also very important;
- Explain that you would like to ask each participant to name one individual action that she or he is willing and able to take in the next month to promote the human right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life, recreation, sport and leisure.

To plan advocacy for the human rights of people with disabilities, see Part 3, “Advocacy! Taking Action for the Human Rights of People with Disabilities,” p. 229.

USEFUL RESOURCES ON PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL LIFE, LEISURE AND SPORT

- Adaptive Sports Foundation: <http://www.adaptivesportsfoundation.org>
- Center for the Study of Sport in Society at Northeastern University, Disability in Sport Program: <http://www.sportinsociety.org/vpd/dis.php>
- International Committee of Sports for the Deaf: <http://www.deaflympics.com>
- International Paralympic Committee: <http://www.paralympic.org>
- John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts: <http://www.kennedy-center.org>
- National Arts and Disability Center: <http://www.nadc.ucla.edu>
- Society for Disability Arts and Culture: <http://www.s4dac.org>
- Special Olympics: <http://www.specialolympics.org>
- United States Association of Blind Athletes: <http://www.usaba.org>
- VSA Arts: <http://www.vsarts.org>

14 Source: Gatjens, Luis Fernando Astorga. “Costa Rica Designs and Tests First Accessibility Protocol in Protected Wildlife Areas.” 2003. *Disability World*.
http://www.disabilityworld.org/01-03_03/access/costarica.shtml