

# Disability Rights at the Crossroads

## Harnessing the Interim Government's Potential to Build an 'Equal Bangladesh'

Presentation by

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# Equal World campaign by Sightsavers

Sightsavers' Equal World campaign calls for the rights of people with disabilities to be upheld worldwide.

Our vision is of a world where people with disabilities – particularly women and girls, and people living in low and middle income countries – can access education, employment, health care and political processes, and participate in society without discrimination.

Since the campaign's launch in 2013 there have been over 100 Equal World campaigns in over 25 countries.

# A snapshot of our campaigns...



TRENDING NEW YEAR HONOURS SMALL CHARITIES COALITION TO CLOSE THE KNOWLEDGE

## Third Sector Awards: Digital Innovation the Year – Sightsavers for Equal World campaign app

07 October 2020



An equal UN for an equal world

International Day of Persons with Disabilities  
Thursday, 3 December 2020  
8am EST

#EqualUN #COS13



#EqualWorld



Sightsavers



sense

Sightsavers #EqualWorld

PRESS RELEASE 3 December 2021

### CAMPAIGNERS CALL ON GOVERNMENT TO COMMIT TO DISABILITY RIGHTS ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Today, on International Day of Persons with Disabilities, campaigners are calling on the government of Tanzania to make lasting commitments to people with disabilities by attending the Global Disability Summit.



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# Legal & policy context in Bangladesh

- ❑ **United Nations Convention on Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD)**
- ❑ **Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013**
- ❑ **Disability Welfare Act 2001 repealed, and rights-based act enacted.**
- ❑ **Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Rules formulated in 2015**
- ❑ **National Action Plan on Disability 2019**
- ❑ **Sustainable Development Goals—Leave No One Behind**
- ❑ **Commitments in Global Disability Summit**
- ❑ **Accession to the Marrakesh Treaty**

# Overall landscape

- ❑ Strong policy and legal framework in place
- ❑ Awareness and positive attitude towards disability rights on the rise
- ❑ Countrywide presence of OPDs
- ❑ People with disabilities now more educated and more aware
- ❑ Slow yet gradual development in terms of implementation the disability-related laws and policies
- ❑ Presence of a dynamic youth community
- ❑ Digital and IT advancement

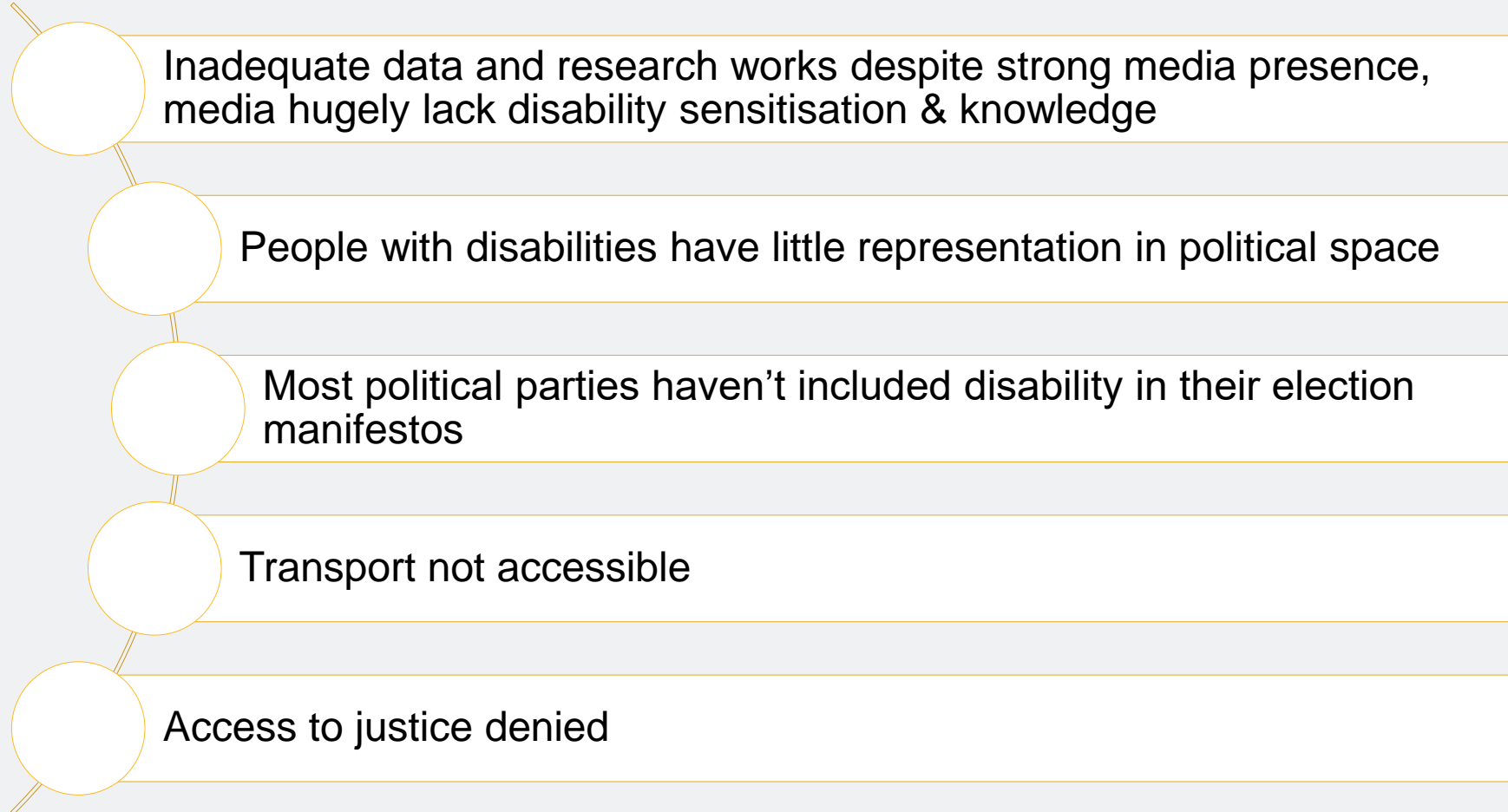
# Challenges

- Non-implementation of the law due to absence of accountability and transparency
- OPDs and people with disabilities lack funds
- Lack of awareness about the Disability Act (Govt officials, general mass etc.)
- Lack of budget for the NAP implementation
- Disability is often considered a business of MoSW solely
- Charity/welfare and medical approach followed
- Stigma and discrimination

# Challenges

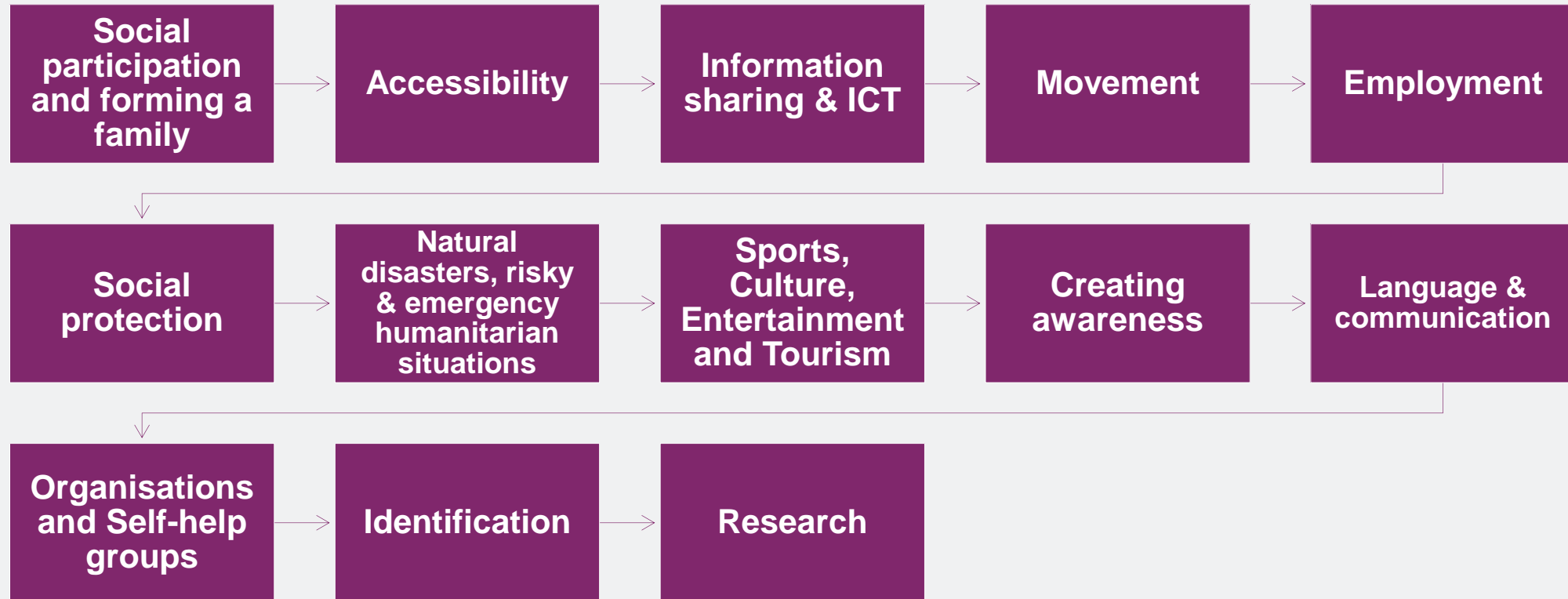
- Law implementing agencies inactive and lack human resources
- Responsible ministries lack coordination and overlook disability issues
- Understanding about disability issues is not clear to many government officials
- Absence of a strong monitoring mechanism
- Many other laws such as BNBC refer to disability issues, but disability overlooked
- Media less committed and lack disability understanding
- Accessibility, mainstreaming & sustainability

# Challenges that exist





# National Action Plan on Disability



# Equal Bangladesh campaign

First country-focused campaign for Sightsavers



Led by a Steering Committee

Unique approach: OPDs and people with disabilities identify the campaign issues, not the other way round.



Sightsavers plays the role of Secretariat

Women with disabilities & their networks

Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) & their leaders

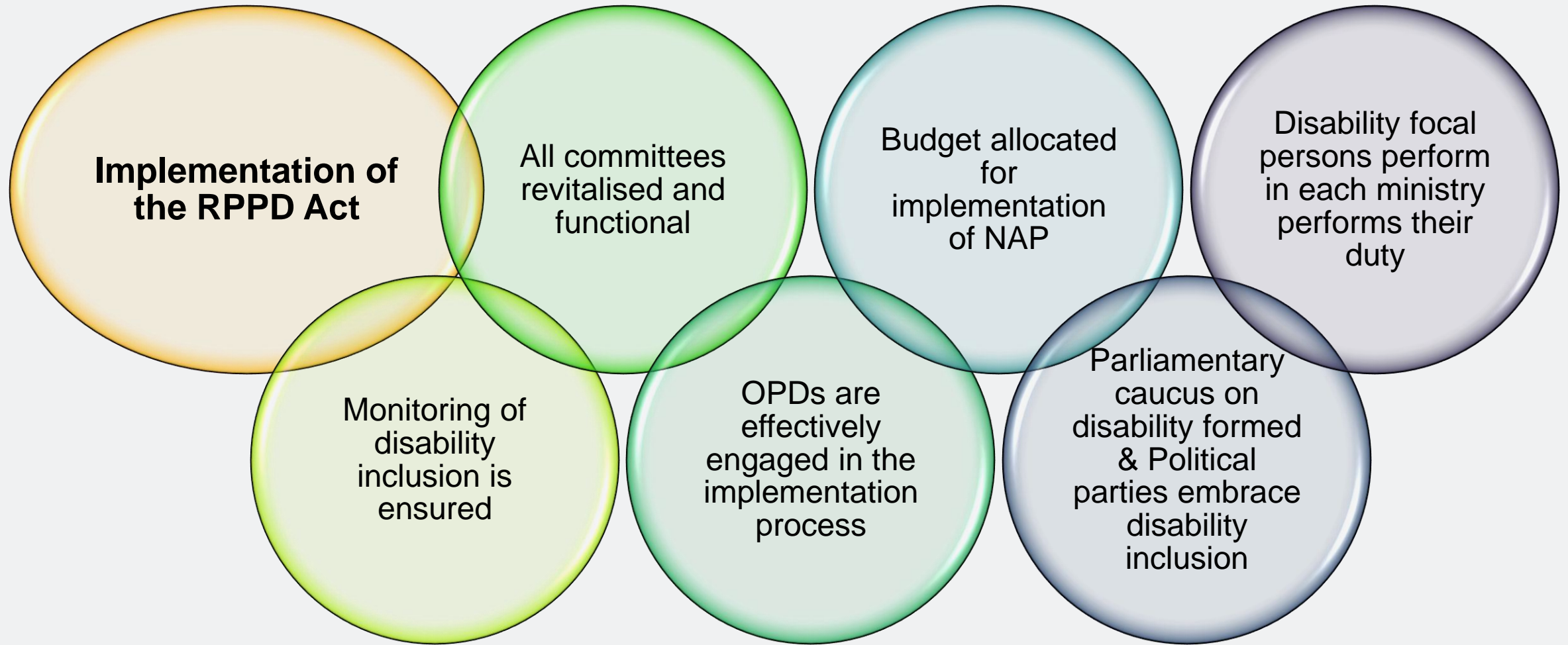
Non-government organisations and International non-government organisations

Disability Alliance on SDGs Bangladesh & IDA

UN agencies (UNDP)

Youth with disabilities from outside of Dhaka

# What needs to be done...



# What Interim Government should prioritise...



# International commitments

<b>GDS'22:</b> <b>4. Implementation of the National Plan of Action</b>	The Government of Bangladesh will focus on effective implementation of the revised action plan (e.g., explore options for necessary budgetary allocation; strengthening monitoring and coordination among relevant line ministries).
<b>Marakkesh Treaty</b>	Bangladesh accedes to the Marakkesh Treaty in 2022, but domestication is yet to take place.
<b>SDGs and VNR</b>	<p>“Leaving no one behind”</p> <p>All the 17 goals are closely connected with disability. However, disability specific indicators are not available against all the targets for all the goals.</p>

# ‘Disability budget’

- ❑ Allocating resources within existing budgets of various ministries like thematic budgets for gender, children, and climate change.
- ❑ Should follow a phased approach, starting with key ministries such as Finance, Health, Education, Social Welfare, Planning, ICT, Transport etc.
- ❑ Will clearly delineate responsibilities across ministries and enable systematic monitoring of progress.
- ❑ Has the potential to create transformative change in the lives of persons with disabilities, can bridge systemic gaps and empower persons with disabilities
- ❑ A disability budget is not just an economic tool; it is a vehicle for empowerment, inclusion, and social justice



**Equal Bangladesh**

# Don't wait for change to happen—be the change!

Join our Somotar Bangladesh campaign and let your voice be heard in support of implementing the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disability Act.

[www.equalbangladesh.org](http://www.equalbangladesh.org)