



02 April 2015 - Today, we pay specific attention to autism spectrum disorders as we observe [World Autism Awareness Day](#) ([#WAAD2015](#)). Themed “Employment: The Autism Advantage”, our attention is turned to the fact that 80% of adults with autism are unemployed. To tackle this, the UN is launching a “Call to Action”.

Across the globe, rates of autism are high and impact children, their families, communities and societies. This is the result of the lack of health resources (especially in developing countries), stigmatization and long-term neglect by both public policy-makers and donors.

The UN promotes the rights and well-being of people with disabilities. It reaffirmed this in the 2008 [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) , the purpose of which is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities.

This year's World Autism Awareness Day, highlighting this, focuses on greater access and work opportunities for persons with autism.

Call to Action

"Recognizing the talents of persons on the autism spectrum, rather than focusing on their weaknesses, is essential to creating a society that is truly inclusive", UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declares.

Doing so, the UN is launching a "Call to Action", encouraging businesses to look at their perception of autism, to learn about the condition and to create opportunities.

Overcoming societal hurdles to unleash potential

Ban remarks, "People with autism have enormous potential. Most have remarkable visual, artistic or academic skills."

In addition, [UNSDN emphasizes research](#) that employers are missing out on abilities that people on the autistic spectrum have in greater abundance than "neurotypical" workers, e.g. heightened ability in pattern recognition and greater attention to detail. To unleash this potential, hurdles need to be overcome e.g. a shortage of vocational training and inadequate support with job placement.

More information

Advocacy organization Autism Speaks is using the UN-observed awareness day to celebrate its Light It Up Blue campaign. Landmarks, businesses, homes and more will light up blue so as to recognise people across the globe affected by autism. For additional information, [visit the campaign's homepage](#)

