



**IRIS**

Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society

Institut de recherche et de développement sur l'intégration et la société

# **Disability and Work The Need for an Intersectional and Solidarity Approach**

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**IRIS- Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society**

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IRIS is a national and international institute Informed by the systemic exclusion that people with disabilities and other marginalized groups face, IRIS' mission is to seed and support transformative social development. Guided by principles of full inclusion and human rights, we carry out research to identify issues and policy options. We foster social innovation to re-imagine inclusion and design new ways to meet unmet needs.

# Focus on those made most vulnerable...

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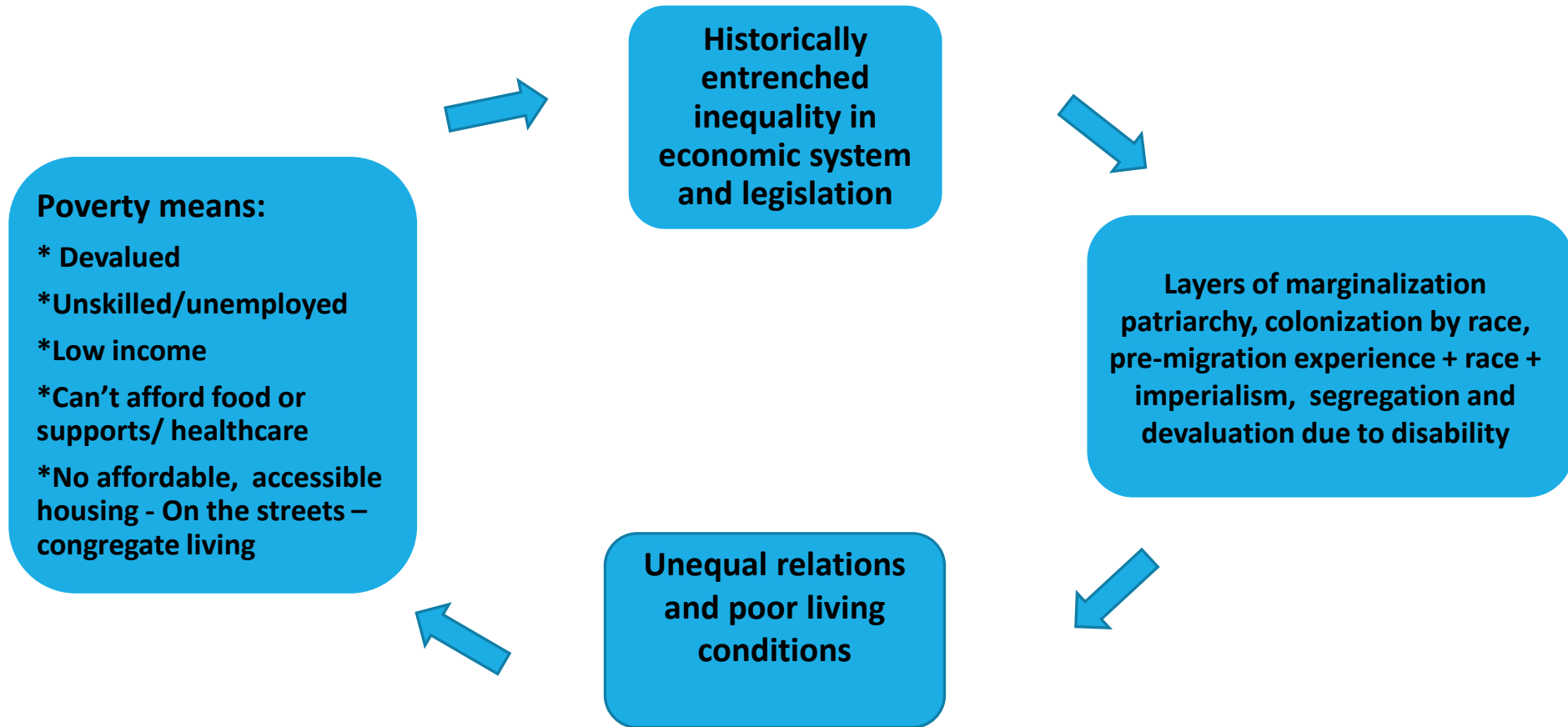
People with disabilities one of the highest poverty rates, amplified when they are also:

- ❑ GBA+ lens ⇒ women, especially Trans women
- ❑ Black, racialized: slavery, discriminatory colonial immigration policies, systemic racism
- ❑ Indigenous: colonial genocide, historical trauma, systemic racism
- ❑ Refugees fleeing colonial/imperialist conflict: loss, trauma, systemic racism
- ❑ PWD living with mental health and addictions, FASD, intellectual disabilities  
→ high rates of violence, vulnerability to trafficking, homelessness

# What is structural oppression?

Structured oppression because it is historically shaped and built into systems

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# How we understand the social construct of disability

Impairment  
and/or Illness

+

Exclusionary  
environments  
and/or attitudes

=

**disability**

**The problem is not the impairment, but rather “disability” arises from the barriers to equal participation.**

# Intersectional or Co-constitutive?

*I'm South Asian*

*I'm South Asian with a disability*

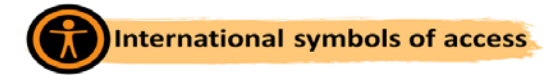
*I'm a South Asian woman with a disability*



**Different cups of coffee with different 'tastes' or experiences**

# Inclusive work environments

**Inclusive Outreach and Promotion:** Inclusive job ads - 2SLGBTQ+ positive, International Symbol, different languages. Distribute materials to immigrant settlement, 2SLGBTQ+, racialized, disability and Indigenous orgs, etc.;



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**The Physical Environment:** reserved parking, pathways to entrances, automatic doors, signage, i.e. Braille, signs lowered, all rooms accessible, provide employees with assistive and adaptive equipment

**Direct Intervention and Communication:** Learn about invisible disabilities, understand the impact of racism, queer-phobia, ableism on mental health, listen and believe, cognizant of offensive language

**Policies, Procedures and Protocols** - policies that state a commitment to a gender-based, intersectional disability justice approach that prioritizes Indigenous rights, fighting anti-Black racism and advocating for the rights of migrant and 2SLGBTQ+ peoples; identify systemic racism, ableism, etc. in your organization;

# **Accessibility in Action**

**Bridging the Disability Community & Regulated  
Entities under the Accessible Canada Act**

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