

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Second Session of the Working Group on the
Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022

2-3 March 2015
New Delhi

**Report on the
Second Session of the Working Group on the
Asian and Pacific Decade of
Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022**

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I. DECISIONS

1. At its Second Session, held in New Delhi on 2 and 3 March 2015, the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, decided on the following:

- (a) The third Session of the Working Group shall be held in Bangkok during the first quarter of 2016, further to the offer of the representative of the Government of Thailand to host the Third Session, which was warmly welcomed and appreciated by the Working Group;
- (b) The Government of India, on behalf of the Working Group, will submit the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific to the Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) to be used as a reference for the development of the disability-inclusive indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- (c) The Government of India will establish and facilitate an e-taskforce to facilitate the creation of an online platform for Working Group members to interact informally to:
 - (i) Exchange good practices and information on the implementation of the Incheon Strategy;
 - (ii) Propose a mechanism and procedure for enhancing implementation of the Incheon Strategy among *all* ESCAP member States and for reporting on road map actions; and
 - (iii) Propose principles and ways to support the preparatory process toward the high-level intergovernmental meeting on the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, to be held in 2017;

The following Members of the Working Group indicated their interest to be part of the e-taskforce: Governments of China, India, Indonesia and Republic of Korea, as well as the Asia Pacific Disability Forum (APDF), the Asia-Pacific Development Centre on Disability (APCD), the Digital Accessible Information System Consortium (DAISY), the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF) and the South Asian Disability Forum (SADF);

- (d) The Working Group members will submit their written comments and suggestions on the draft Operational Guide on Disability-inclusive Meetings to the ESCAP secretariat by 31 March 2015.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The following recommendations also emerged from the discussions of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, at its Second Session:

(a) Working Group members should:

- (i) Submit to the ESCAP Secretariat 60 days in advance of the next regular session of the Working Group reports on the implementation of the Incheon Strategy, particularly on road map actions;
- (ii) Contact national civil aviation authorities in their respective countries to obtain information on their policies and rules regarding passengers with disabilities, including issues regarding batteries used for motorized wheelchairs.

(b) The ESCAP secretariat should:

- (i) Create reporting templates for Working Group members and other member States to report to the ESCAP secretariat in pursuance of decision (c) (ii) and recommendation 2 (a) (i);
- (ii) Integrate Working Group members' suggestions into the draft Operational Guide on Disability-inclusive Meetings and disseminate the finalized publication to key United Nations entities and all member States as well as key civil society organizations (CSOs);
- (iii) Upload on the ESCAP and Make the Right Real websites the implementation status of the regional road map action by the ESCAP secretariat in 2013 and 2014;
- (iv) Continue to use the ESCAP trust fund as a means to support the provision of reasonable accommodation for participants with disabilities in Working Group sessions;
- (v) Circulate the list of participants of the Expert Group Meeting on Effective Data Generation for Incheon Strategy Indicators, held on 6 and 7 November 2013 in Bangkok, to all Working Group members.

III. PROCEEDINGS

A. Opening of the Second Session of the Working Group

3. The Second Session was opened by H.E. Mr. Thaawarchand Gehlot, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. In his statement, the Minister expressed the commitment of the Government of India to the implementation of the Incheon Strategy to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific as well

as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He welcomed the efforts of the Working Group to support the accelerated implementation of the Incheon Strategy and the region's efforts to move towards a disability-inclusive society. The Minister also voiced the Indian Government's continuing commitment to the fulfilment of the rights of persons with disabilities in all relevant development areas.

Statements were also delivered by:

- (a) Mr. Lov Verma, Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India;
- (b) Mr. Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India; and
- (c) Mr. Nagesh Kumar, Director, ESCAP Subregional Office, South and South-West Asia (SRO-SSWA).

B. Review of the implementation of decisions and recommendations emanating from the First Session of the Working Group

4. The Session had before it the report on the First Session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, Incheon, Republic of Korea, 25-26 February 2014 (SDD/APDPD(3)/WG(2)/ INF/5), the Proposal of the General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDD/APDPD(3)/WG(2)/INF/4/Rev.1) as well as the draft Operational Guide on Disability-inclusive Meetings (SDD/APDPD(3)/WG(2)/2).

5. The following Working Group Government members made interventions: China; India; Republic of Korea and Thailand. The following CSOs made interventions: APCD; DAISY; the Inclusion International Asia-Pacific Regional Forum (IIAP); PDF; the Rehabilitation International Asian-Pacific Region (RIAP); the World Blind Union Asia-Pacific (WBUAP); the World Federation of the Deaf Regional Secretariat in Asia and the Pacific (WFDAP); the World Federation of the Deaf Blind Asia and the Pacific (WFDbAP); and the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (WNUSP).

6. Several Working Group members expressed their appreciation to the Government of India and for hosting the Second Session of the Working Group and for the generous financial support.

7. The ESCAP secretariat informed the Session of the status of disability-inclusion in the current draft of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that disability was referenced in two paragraphs in the introduction and in a total of five goals covering the areas of education, employment, inequality, human settlement and means of implementation. The Working Group was of the view that the disability perspective should also be reflected in other goals, including in the area of health, and that further advocacy was needed for achieving more comprehensive disability-inclusion in the SDGs.

8. The ESCAP secretariat presented the main concepts and content of the draft Operational Guide on Disability-inclusive Meetings. The Session acknowledged with appreciation the work undertaken by the ESCAP secretariat on the draft as well as its usefulness for member States and other stakeholders in the region. It was suggested that the Guide include an additional section on how the media should conduct interviews with

participants and speakers with disabilities and duly reflect the interests of persons with psychosocial disabilities in the Guide.

C. Review of progress in the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022

9. The Session had before it the secretariat's summary report based on the reports received from the Working Group members (SDD/APDPD (3)/WG (2)/1/Rev.1).

10. The following Working Group Government members made interventions: Bangladesh; China; India; Indonesia; Japan; the Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa and Thailand. The following CSOs intervened: APDF; APCD; Asia-Pacific DPO United (APDPO); the Central Asia Disability Forum (CADF); DAISY; IIAP; PDF; RIAP; SADF; WBUAP; WFDAP; WFDAP; and WNUSP.

11. The ESCAP secretariat presented a summary of actions taken by Working Group members and the ESCAP secretariat on the road map for the implementation of the Incheon Strategy.

12. Working Group Government members elaborated on their actions, particularly with regard to ongoing efforts to promote the Incheon Strategy and harmonize domestic legislation and policies with the CRPD, including areas such as employment promotion, protection from abuse, empowerment of women with disabilities, improvement of income security, data collection as well as the dissemination of the Incheon Strategy in accessible formats. The Session was further informed that the Government of Kazakhstan had completed its domestic procedure for the ratification of the CRPD.

13. Several Working Group members highlighted successful examples of multi-stakeholder engagement in mainstreaming disability perspectives in different development agendas. The Session recognized that disability had been extensively referenced in the latest draft post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction, unlike its predecessor, owing to efforts made by the United Nations system, Governments and CSOs, including several Working Group members. In addition, the Session appreciated efforts made by the Government of China in promoting the disability agenda in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

14. Several Working Group members pointed out the importance of accessible information as a precondition to ensure inclusive participation of persons with disabilities in development processes with references made to ESCAP's technical cooperation project on accessibility, publications on accessible information and e-publication in the DAISY format.

15. The Session recognized that actions had been taken by Working Group members for persons with specific impairments. For example, the Government of Bangladesh had 100 centres providing services for autistic children. The South Asia network for persons with autism and the association of hard of hearing had been established. WFDAP had also conducted a study on the situation of deaf women.

16. The Government of India appreciated the ESCAP secretariat's publication of the easy-to-understand version of the Incheon Strategy, and announced that it would translate it into Hindi for wider distribution in the country.

17. APDPO drew the Session's attention to an incident when a motorized wheelchair user and a member of the APDPO had been refused to board an airplane. The Session agreed that members should find out details of national airports' regulations regarding motorized wheelchairs and treatment of passengers with diverse disabilities.

18. PDF proposed that there should be a better mechanism to have timely and full submission of reports from all Working Group members on the implementation of road map action in view of the fact that three Working Group members had not submitted their reports. PDF further stated that regular reporting on road map action should involve other non-Working Group member States.

D. Consideration of preparations for the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities in 2017

19. The following Working Group Government members made interventions: Bhutan; China; Indonesia; Japan; Russian Federation and Thailand. The following CSOs made intervention: APCD; APDPO; DAISY; RIAP; SADF and WNUSP.

20. The ESCAP secretariat presented information on planned milestone events that would lead up to the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities in 2017. A particular emphasis was given to efforts to establish baseline data on the Incheon Strategy indicators. The Secretariat pointed out that a questionnaire for the midpoint review would be distributed to all member States and selected CSOs in 2016.

21. Several members stated the difficulties they faced in collecting data on the Incheon Strategy Indicators by 2017. The ESCAP secretariat informed the Session that they stood ready to support member States in that endeavour to collect data on the 41 core indicators and that the ESCAP Guide on Disability Indicators for the Incheon Strategy would serve as a useful guide for Governments' ongoing efforts to strengthen disability data collection.

22. Several CSO Working Group members emphasized that they could play a critical role as Government partners at the national level in supporting the collection of disability data.

23. APCD highlighted the importance of having a systematic and comprehensive midpoint review of the CSOs implementation of the Incheon Strategy. The ESCAP secretariat informed the Session that a preparatory meeting with CSOs would take place prior to the high-level meeting in 2017.

E. Review of resource mobilization for Decade progress

24. The Session reviewed the status of resource mobilization for the Decade implementation. The ESCAP secretariat presented an overview of the financial status of the ESCAP Multi-donor Trust Fund for the past three years. The secretariat thanked all those who had contributed to the Trust Fund and stressed the need for members of the Working Group as well as other non-Working Group members to continue to contribute to the Trust Fund.

25. A representative of the Government of the Republic of Korea provided an update on the use of the Make the Right Real Fund in the Republic of Korea.
26. During the discussion, it was emphasized that provision of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, especially for deaf and blind persons as well as deafblind persons and persons with intellectual disabilities, was critical to ensure sustained participation of persons with various disabilities in the Working Group sessions. APCD proposed that provision of reasonable accommodation should be supported by the ESCAP Multi-donor Trust Fund and that this required additional contributions.

F. Discussion on the date and venue of the next regular session

27. The Session welcomed with appreciation the Government of Thailand's proposal to host the next regular session in Bangkok during the first quarter of 2016. The ESCAP secretariat confirmed that it would collaborate closely the Government of Thailand on the preparations for and servicing of the Session.

G. Other matters

28. APDF proposed to have inter-sessional ad-hoc Working Group meetings to strengthen the implementation of the Incheon Strategy and better prepare for the midpoint review of the Decade before the next regular session. The Session discussed the proposal, and decided against it on the following grounds:

- (a) Organization of another meeting would be costly;
- (b) Implementation of any project or policy on disability would take more than six months and therefore there would be limited information to report on prior to the next regular session;
- (c) Inter-sessional communications among Working Group members through the e-forum should be sufficient;
- (d) Absence from any ad-hoc sessions would be counted as a factor to relinquish membership of the Working Group in pursuance of Rule 4.3 contained in the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with

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