

## •Special Paper•

# Accelerating the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities

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## The Background of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities

### The Asia and Pacific Region

Asia and Pacific is a vast region. It has about 60% of the world population. In Asia, you can find some of the oldest civilizations and religions; some of the most advanced as well as poorest economies, and many Asians living in rural and mountainous areas. Diversities and differences among governments and peoples of Asia are the norm rather than the exception.

Poverty situation of people with disabilities in Asia: People with disabilities in the region are facing critical and severe situations. About 80% of Asian people with disabilities live in rural or remote areas. Among the 900 million very poor people in the Region, the disabled are among the most discriminated against and the most impoverished. It is estimated that 238 million people with disabilities in the region are of working age. They are grossly under-represented in the workforce. At the same time, people with disabilities often lack access to the very services and experiences that could lead to successful participation in the economic mainstream - such as vocational training, job opportunities or credit for self-employment. It is therefore not surprised that the unemployment rates of people with disabilities in many countries are about 40% to 80%.

The region is facing further challenges that are impeding governmental efforts in dealing with disability challenges.

### Man-made and Natural Disasters

Severe man-made disasters include massive racial confrontations have been reported in several countries since 1998. Severe natural disasters have been reported in

many countries, including earthquake, Tsunami, massive flooding, severe cyclones. A great deal of efforts on a long term basis will be needed from both government and society to support and empower the large number of people who are disaster victims and have become disabled.

### Financial Upheavals

The Region experiences the first severe financial turmoil in modern history in 1997, followed by another crisis in 2003 caused by the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Most countries have recovered, though with different speed, from the crises, and some with rapid growth until 2008 when the subprime mortgage crises and liquidity crunches in USA exploded, and more recently European financial crisis. The region's future economy is becoming even more uncertain, and returning to a path of steady growth seems to be beyond reach in the foreseeable future.

### A Review of the Disability Movements in the Region

The disability movements over the past decades have witnessed a strong sense of brotherhood and sisterhood as well as examples of deep collaboration among governments and peoples in Asia. Immediately upon the close of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons 1983-1992, ESCAP with the unanimous approval of all its member governments, proclaimed the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 1993-2002 (A/P Decade), a demonstration of a rather exceptional regional solidarity and consensus political will. In 2002, ESCAP again with unanimous approval of its members, proclaimed the extension of the Decade to 2003-2012, and the proclamation of the Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) for compliance of its member governments.

Since the BMF+5, uncertainties had arisen as to fu-

DOI:10.3969/j.issn.1001-1242.2013.06.004

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ture direction of the regional disability movement. Governments in the Region were not too enthusiastic in pursuing a new and common commitment for post-BMF strategy as they already had full political agenda and faced dwindling resources. CSOs however were very concerned that without a common regional strategy, the regional disability movement would be severely weakened (Kwok, 2012). During all the regional platforms held prior to 2010, CSO collaborated with one mind and cried out with one voice, which was for the launch of a New Decade. With support from ESCAP and some governments, the ESCAP Commission finally resolved in May 2010 to organize the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting in Incheon City, South Korea for the purpose of adopting the Incheon Strategy for the new Asian and Pacific Make the Right Real Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013 to 2022.

#### **Ministerial Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022(UN ESCAP, 2012a).**

It has been an exciting and happy climax that the second Decade was extended by a unanimous resolution of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, held at Incheon, Republic of Korea, from 29 October to 2 November 2012. The ministers, and representatives of members and associate members of the UN ESCAP assembled at the meeting unanimously:

1. Adopt the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, to catalyse action that shall accelerate, during the new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, the achievement of the regional vision of an inclusive society that ensures, promotes and upholds the rights of all persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific;
2. Recognize the central role of government in ensuring, promoting and upholding the rights of persons with disabilities and in promoting the inclusion of disability dimensions in the development agenda beyond 2015 in diverse sectors;
3. Commit to implement the present Declaration and the

Incheon Strategy by promoting action to reach the Incheon goals and targets by 2022;

4. Invite all concerned stakeholders, including the following, to join in a region-wide partnership to contribute to the implementation of the present Declaration and the Incheon Strategy:

- (a) Subregional intergovernmental entities to promote and strengthen subregional cooperation for disability-inclusive development, in coordination with ESCAP;
- (b) Development cooperation agencies, to strengthen the disability-inclusiveness of their policies, plans and programmes;
- (c) The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, to harness their technical and financial resources for promoting disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific;
- (d) The United Nations system to jointly deliver disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific;
- (e) Civil society organizations, particularly organizations of and for persons with disabilities, to participate effectively in the monitoring and evaluation of the Decade to foster continuous responsiveness on the aspirations and needs of persons with disabilities, including through outreach to diverse disability groups, and contributing to policy and programme development and implementation;
- (f) Organizations of and for persons with disabilities, to participate actively in decision-making processes concerning the Incheon Strategy;
- (g) The private sector, to promote disability-inclusive business practices;

#### **The Incheon Strategy to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific Region(United Nations, 2012)**

##### **Principles and Policy Directions**

The Incheon Strategy is based on the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and has adopted the following policy directions:

- (a) Legislative, administrative and other measures supportive of rights fulfilment are adopted, implemented, reviewed and strengthened so that disability-based discrimination is eliminated;
- (b) Development policies and programmes are disability-inclusive and gender-sensitive and harness the potential of

combining universal design with technological advancements for enabling persons with disabilities to fulfil their rights;

(c) Development policies and programmes address the basic needs of persons with disabilities and their families who live in poverty;

(d) Effective and timely collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated disability data are pursued for evidence-based policymaking;

(e) National, subnational and local policies and programmes are based on plans that are explicitly inclusive of persons with disabilities and that also prioritize the active participation of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in relevant decision-making processes;

(f) The necessary budgetary support is provided at all levels for disability-inclusive development and tax policies facilitate the inclusion of persons with disabilities;

(g) All national, subregional, regional and international entities concerned with development include disability dimensions in their policies and programmes;

(h) National, subnational and local coordination, with subregional and regional linkages, ensure that disability inclusion in development policies and programmes is strengthened through intensification of multisectoral consultation and collaboration, to expedite and review Decade implementation and share related good practices;

(i) Community- and family-based inclusive development is promoted in order to ensure that all persons with disabilities, irrespective of socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, ethnicity and location, are able, on an equal basis with others, to contribute to and benefit from development initiatives, particularly poverty reduction programmes;

(j) Persons with disabilities are included in mainstream community life and are supported with life choices equal to those of others, including the option to live independently;

(k) Persons with disabilities have access to the physical environment, public transportation, knowledge, information and communication, in a usable manner, through universal design and assistive technologies with reasonable accommodation provided, and taking into consideration the need to accommodate economic, geographic, linguistic and other aspects of cultural diversity, which altogether

constitute a critical bridge to fulfilling their rights;

(l) Diverse disability groups are empowered;

(m) Organizations of and for persons with disabilities, self-help groups and self-advocacy groups, with support, as required by families and caregivers, participate in decision-making, as appropriate, to ensure that the interests of marginalized groups are adequately addressed;

(n) Action on awareness-raising is strengthened and continued, including through the provision of adequate budgetary support, in the Asian and Pacific region during the Decade to improve attitudes and behaviour and mobilize effective multi-sectoral engagement in implementation modalities.

### Incheon Goals and Targets

The Incheon Strategy is the world's first set of regionally-agreed disability-inclusive development goals. The Strategy contains 10 inter-related time-bound Goals, 27 targets and 62 indicators. The Incheon Strategy aims to accelerate actions to promote disability-inclusive development and CRPD ratification in the ESCAP region. The Strategy is a pioneering regional framework that will guide national and regional action in the new Decade. The time frame for achieving the goals and targets is the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013 to 2022. The 62 indicators are classified either as core indicators or supplementary indicators. Core indicators are to facilitate intercountry sharing of progress in the course of the new Decade; these are indicators for which data can be generated with some effort. Supplementary indicators may facilitate progress tracking among countries with similar social and economic development conditions and for which data may be less easy to collect. ESCAP has committed to develop guidance on these indicators for use by its member countries. Below is a tabulation of the Incheon Goals and Targets (Table 1).

### Conclusion

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations, stated, "As we launch the new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013—2022, let us focus on addressing the remaining challenges. By adopting — and implementing — the Incheon Strategy, you can help to ensure a disability inclusive post-2015 development agenda."

**Table 1 Incheon Goals and Targets**

Goal	Target
<b>Goal 1</b> Reduce poverty and enhance work and employment prospects	<b>Target 1.A</b> Eliminate extreme poverty among persons with disabilities; <b>Target 1.B</b> Increase work and employment for persons of working age with disabilities who can and want to work; <b>Target 1.C</b> Increase the participation of persons with disabilities in vocational training and other employment-support programmes funded by governments
<b>Goal 2</b> Promote participation in political processes and in decision-making	<b>Target 2.A</b> Ensure that persons with disabilities are represented in government decision-making bodies; <b>Target 2.B</b> Provide reasonable accommodation to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities in the political process
<b>Goal 3</b> Enhance access to the physical environment, public transportation, knowledge, information and communication	<b>Target 3.A</b> Increase the accessibility of the physical environment in the national capital that is open to the public; <b>Target 3.B</b> Enhance the accessibility and usability of public transportation; <b>Target 3.C</b> Enhance the accessibility and usability of information and communications services; <b>Target 3.D</b> Halve the proportion of persons with disabilities who need but do not have appropriate assistive devices or products
<b>Goal 4</b> Strengthen social protection	<b>Target 4.A</b> Increase access to all health services, including rehabilitation, for all persons with disabilities; <b>Target 4.B</b> Increase coverage of persons with disabilities within social protection programmes; <b>Target 4.C</b> Enhance services and programmes, including for personal assistance and peer counselling, that support persons with disabilities, especially those with multiple, extensive and diverse disabilities, in living independently in the community
<b>Goal 5</b> Expand early intervention and education of children with disabilities	<b>Target 5.A</b> Enhance measures for early detection of, and intervention for, children with disabilities from birth to pre-school age; <b>Target 5.B</b> Halve the gap between children with disabilities and children without disabilities in enrolment rates for primary and secondary education
<b>Goal 6</b> Ensure gender equality and women's empowerment	<b>Target 6.A</b> Enable girls and women with disabilities to have equitable access to mainstream development opportunities; <b>Target 6.B</b> Ensure representation of women with disabilities in government decision-making bodies; <b>Target 6.C</b> Ensure that all girls and women with disabilities have access to sexual and reproductive health services on an equitable basis with girls and women without disabilities; <b>Target 6.D</b> Increase measures to protect girls and women with disabilities from all forms of violence and abuse
<b>Goal 7</b> Ensure disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management	<b>Target 7.A</b> Strengthen disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction planning; <b>Target 7.B</b> Strengthen implementation of measures on providing timely and appropriate support to persons with disabilities in responding to disasters
<b>Goal 8</b> Improve the reliability and comparability of disability data	<b>Target 8.A</b> Produce and disseminate reliable and internationally comparable disability statistics in formats that are accessible by persons with disabilities; <b>Target 8.B</b> Establish reliable disability statistics by the midpoint of the Decade, 2017, as the source for tracking progress towards the achievement of the goals and targets in the Incheon Strategy
<b>Goal 9</b> Accelerate the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the harmonization of national legislation with the Convention	<b>Target 9.A</b> By the midpoint of the Decade (2017), 10 more Asia-Pacific Governments will have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and by the end of the Decade (2022) another 10 Asia-Pacific Governments will have ratified or acceded to the Convention; <b>Target 9.B</b> Enact national laws which include anti-discrimination provisions, technical standards and other measures to uphold and protect the rights of persons with disabilities and amend or nullify national laws that directly or indirectly discriminate against persons with disabilities, with a view to harmonizing national legislation with the Convention
<b>Goal 10</b> Advance subregional, regional and interregional cooperation	<b>Target 10.A</b> Contribute to the Asia-Pacific Multi-donor Trust Fund managed by ESCAP as well as initiatives and programmes to support the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, and the Incheon Strategy; <b>Target 10.B</b> Development cooperation agencies in the Asia-Pacific region strengthen the disability-inclusiveness of their policies and programmes; <b>Target 10.C</b> United Nations regional commissions strengthen interregional exchange of experiences and good practices concerning disability issues and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

On the occasion of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting, the UN ESCAP and the Government of the Republic of Korea honored ten Asia-Pacific Champions of Disability Rights and seven Promoters for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2013-2022. The Champions were recognized for their outstanding achievements and impacts in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities. The Promoters were recognized for their exceptional knowledge and experiences in specialized areas related to the ten goals of the Incheon Strategy to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. From China, Ms. Zhang Haidi, Vice-Chairperson, State Council Working Committee on Disability, and Chairperson, China Disabled Persons' Federation, Beijing, China is honoured as a Champion; and Joseph Kwok is honoured as a Promoter.

Joseph Kwok is pleased to pledge his support, and to work with all concerned stakeholders, including the private sector, to accelerate the implementation of the Incheon Strategy.

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