
Monday & Tuesday, 25-26 July 2022 (10:00–12:00 & 14:00 – 16:30 UTC+7)
Online (Zoom)

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Introduction

As the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, concludes in 2022, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is organizing the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, pursuant to ESCAP resolution 69/13. The meeting will be hosted by the Government of Indonesia, in Jakarta and online from 19 to 21 October 2022. The high-level intergovernmental meeting will review progress and achievements made in the Decade (2013-2022), foster consensus on new strategic directions, and renew commitments by ESCAP members and associate members to disability rights and disability-inclusive development in the Asia-Pacific region, leading up to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As part of the final review, ESCAP will organize stakeholder consultations on solicit feedback and inputs from various stakeholders, especially organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and other civil society organizations (CSOs), on progress made in the Decade and new strategic directions. The stakeholder consultations will provide a platform to explore ways in which persons with disabilities and their representative organizations could be engaged in abovementioned the high-level intergovernmental meeting.

Main findings and recommendations of the consultations will be summarized in an information paper to be submitted to the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022.

2. Objectives of consultations
The purpose of the stakeholder consultations is to facilitate and expand collaboration and participation in the final review process, and in particular to elicit stakeholder experiences, views and recommendations around the following:

- New strategic directions and priorities for disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific, building on experiences and lessons from the current Decade as well as emerging challenges and opportunities.
- Strategies and approaches for the engagement of persons with disabilities, including OPDs and other relevant CSOs, in the high-level intergovernmental meeting to strengthen voices of the persons with disabilities.
- Needs and opportunities for technical cooperation and joint advocacy among persons with disabilities, Governments, the United Nations and other stakeholders.

3. Content and format

The consultations will consist of four sessions to be held in two consecutive days from 25 to 26 July 2022. The consultations will be held online via the Zoom Meeting platform.

Agenda of the consultations will be centered around:

- Recommendations on key priority areas of work, and strategies to address remaining challenges and to leverage emerging opportunities for disability-inclusive development in the Asia-Pacific region, which shall be considered and reflected in the outcome of the high-level intergovernmental meeting.
- The potential and feasibility of forming a steering committee of OPDs/CSOs to facilitate the engagement of persons with disabilities, and to represent the voices of persons with disabilities at the high-level intergovernmental meeting.

The consultation is a closed meeting. In order to have open and frank discussions, the Chatham House Rule will be followed, which means that participants are free to use the information received but may not reveal the identity or the affiliation of the speaker(s), or of any other participant.

4. Organizing team

The stakeholder consultations will be co-designed and co-organized by the 15 CSO members of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, together with ESCAP.
5. Participants

Participation in the stakeholder consultations will be by invitation only. ESCAP and the CSO co-organizers will plan to invite the distinguished group of ESCAP Champions and Promoters of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, and OPDs and relevant CSOs actively involved in disability rights advocacy and disability inclusion from across the region, as well as other disability inclusion champions and advocates.

Participation in the stakeholder consultations should be balanced with regard to geography/region, gender and area of work/sector. In the interest of ensuring diverse representation at the consultations, we recommend only one representative per organization to join the consultations.

Zoom meeting registration for the consultations will be distributed in the second week of July. Please feel free to forward the invitation to colleagues and partners.

6. Expected outcomes and next steps

The stakeholder consultations are expected to ensure meaningful, inclusive, transparent and diverse participation by stakeholders with respect to the final review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, and the development of new strategic directions going forward.

An information paper that summarizes inputs and recommendations from the stakeholder consultations, as well as other inputs and insights collected from civil society perspectives will be developed and posted on the ESCAP website to inform the final review process and the high-level intergovernmental meeting.

7. Background

Asia and the Pacific is home to more than 700 million persons with disabilities who face significant barriers to full and effective participation in society. The ESCAP region was the first in the world to proclaim a regional initiative focusing on disability-inclusive development, in follow-up to the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992). In 2022, Governments, peoples and other diverse

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1 ESCAP Champions and Promoters for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, have committed to collective effort in accelerating implementation of the Incheon Strategy to ‘Make the Right Real’ for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, the guiding policy document of the Decade. This distinguished group is comprised of 10 Champions and seven Promoters.
stakeholders in the ESCAP region² stand poised at the conclusion of the third Decade for charting the next chapter of disability-inclusive development in the region.

To realize the regional vision of inclusive development that upholds the rights of all persons with disabilities, ESCAP member States proclaimed the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013-2022),³ and adopted the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, the world’s first set of disability-specific development goals.

The Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy provides guidance on further advancing disability-inclusive development. It was adopted by the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013–2022) (Beijing, 27 November - 1 December 2017) and endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-fourth session (Bangkok, 11–16 May 2018).

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, via its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, the Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). "Disability" is explicitly mentioned in seven SDG targets and 10 SDG indicators. Under SDG 17, Governments are encouraged to disaggregate all relevant SDG data by disability and other parameters.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015-2030, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly via its resolution A/RES/69/283 of 3 June 2015, recognizes persons with disabilities as one of the key stakeholders in disaster risk reduction. It encourages Governments and all other stakeholders to integrate universal design-based accessibility into all phases of the disaster risk reduction management cycle.

In view of the inherent synergies with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the abovementioned policy instruments, both the Incheon Strategy and the Beijing Declaration and Action Plan constitute a unique set of policy and advocacy tools to support the advancement of disability rights and the realization of inclusive and sustainable societies, with no one left behind.

This set of policy and advocacy tools⁴ supports ESCAP members and associate members in making and tracking progress towards empowering persons with disabilities and improving their quality of life in the Asian and Pacific region.

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² [https://www.unescap.org/about/member-states](https://www.unescap.org/about/member-states)
At the present crossroads in the history of the region’s endeavours to uphold the rights of all peoples with diverse disabilities, there is a need for Governments, persons with disabilities and other stakeholders in the region to chart the way forward towards more disability-inclusive societies in Asia and the Pacific, bearing in mind insights from this unprecedented 30-year regional commitment to disability rights.

Against this background, ESCAP is leading a comprehensive final review of the implementation of the present Decade as follows:

(1) An analytical review of the implementation of the present Decade based on Government and civil society responses to a survey, as well as existing credible sources;

(2) Organization of an expert group meeting (22-23 June 2022) and stakeholder consultations (25-26 July 2022). These will culminate in a high-level intergovernmental meeting, to be convened from 19 to 21 October 2022 in Jakarta, to conclude the Decade and galvanize fresh commitment and renewed support for disability rights and disability-inclusive development in the Asian and Pacific region.

It is expected that the high-level intergovernmental meeting will consider an outcome document, with a view to adopting it. The outcome document is intended to guide Governments, in partnership with various stakeholders and the United Nations, in contributing towards strengthening cooperation for disability-inclusive development and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It will also guide the ESCAP secretariat in providing technical assistance to and facilitating regional and subregional dialogues and technical cooperation among the Governments of the ESCAP membership, sister entities in the United Nations system, civil society organizations, as well as other key actors in Asia and the Pacific, in the period from 2023 through 2030.

ESCAP initiatives, as approved by its intergovernmental membership over the past 30 years, have yielded an impact on disability inclusion and disability rights in the Asian and Pacific region. The impact of ESCAP initiatives include the following:

1. **First ESCAP Decade, 1993-2002, paradigm shift 1:** Changing the limited understanding of disability as being associated mainly with welfare and rehabilitation and medicalization of the perception of disabled persons, to a comprehensive understanding of the dignity, worth and rights of disabled persons and the need for multi-sectoral collaborative action on policies to cover all aspects of the lives of disabled persons, with a regional focus on the self-empowerment of disabled persons. The ESCAP region is credited to have issued the first call for an international convention to protect the rights of disabled persons. Women and girls with disabilities were highlighted in the ESCAP publication

2. **Second ESCAP Decade, 2003-2012, paradigm shift 2:**
   Introducing the rights-based approach to disability issues, and shifting attention to disabled persons as rights holders. Through the facilitation and intermediation of the ESCAP secretariat, key actors in the ESCAP region contributed a regional draft that laid the initial foundation for the drafting of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. See the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.

3. **Third ESCAP Decade, 2013-2022, paradigm shift 3:**
   Highlighting the importance of an evidence-based approach to promoting disability-inclusive development, the ESCAP membership adopted the world’s first set of 10 regionally agreed disability-specific development goals, with 27 targets and 62 indicators. These goals, targets and indicators provide a means of tracking progress towards improving the quality of life, and the fulfilment of the rights, of persons with disabilities. See the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific (also known as the Incheon Strategy). The Incheon Strategy built on a recognition of the absence of disability from the Millennium Development Goals and it anticipated the Sustainable Development Goals.

   The **Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy** (also known as the Beijing Declaration and Action Plan) supplements the Incheon Strategy; it specifies the substantive linkages between the Incheon Strategy and the SDGs.

   The United Nations Secretary-General launched in June 2019 the **United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy** (UNDIS), to mainstream disability perspectives into the work of all entities in the United Nations system, and to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in the work of the United Nations.

   Today, as compared with three decades ago, there is a significant increase in the number of stakeholders working in diverse sectors and fields. ESCAP and its membership, as well as its partners from diverse stakeholders, are exploring a way forward that gives a sharp focus to

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5 [https://www.un.org/en/content/disabilitystrategy/](https://www.un.org/en/content/disabilitystrategy/)
continued efforts in disability-inclusive development in the changing landscape for the post-2022 period up to 2030, the concluding year of the SDGs.

8. Engagement of persons with disabilities, civil society organizations and other stakeholders

An expert group meeting was conducted online on 22-23 June 2022. The expert group meeting convened disability experts, advocates and champions, including persons with diverse disabilities, from key OPDs, CSOs, research institutions, businesses and sister entities in the United Nations entities and other international, regional and subregional development organizations from across the region. The expert group meeting generated recommendations on strategic directions and action priorities for the next phase of disability-inclusive development in the region, especially with regard to the following areas:

- Combating ableism, promoting diversity and inclusion
- Strengthening disability data and progress tracking of disability-inclusive development
- Harmonization of domestic legislation with the CRPD
- Private sector engagement
- Addressing ageing-gender-disability intersectionalities
- Disability groups that tend to be overlooked
- Disability inclusion in the media and film
- Disability action in the new normal
- Strengthening Partnerships

More information about the expert group meeting can be found at: https://www.unescap.org/events/2022/expert-group-meeting-final-review-asian-and-pacific-decade-persons-disabilities-2013.

Following the expert group meeting, stakeholder consultations will be organized in July 2022, to elicit a broader range of inputs and recommendations on the region’s new strategic directions and priorities to inform the outcome of the high-level intergovernmental meeting, and to strategize CSO actions and participation in the high-level intergovernmental meeting to be held in Jakarta and online in October 2022.

The stakeholder consultations will be co-designed and co-organized by the ESCAP secretariat and the CSO members of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022. The consultations will be held online.
ESCAP will facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities, as well as relevant stakeholders in the official agenda of the high-level intergovernmental meeting, inter alia, through: (a) participation as expert roundtable panelists; and (b) enabling oral interventions in line with the rules of procedures of the Commission. OPDs and CSOs are also invited to organize side events, including in collaboration with other stakeholders, ESAP member States, United Nations entities and others, during the high-level intergovernmental meeting.

9. Background documents

Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific & Beijing Declaration and Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy

www.maketherightreal.net/final-review

www.maketherightreal.net/working-group

Additional information about the Decade and Incheon Strategy is available on the UN ESCAP dedicated website: www.maketherightreal.net/

Additional information about the high-level intergovernmental meeting is available on the UN ESCAP dedicated event page: unescap.org/events/2022/high-level-intergovernmental-meeting-final-review-asian-and-pacific-decade-persons