Expert Group Meeting to develop the “Operational Guide on Implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023-2032”

26-27 June 2023, Bangkok and Online

Concept Note

I. 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. Member States in the ESCAP region\(^1\) had proclaimed three consecutive Asian and Pacific Decades of Persons with Disabilities between 1993 and 2022 during which substantive progress has been made towards disability-inclusive development.

Through the final review of the third Decade, member States and stakeholders recognized that goals and objectives set forth in the previous Decade from 2013 to 2022, through the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific and the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy, had not been met. In this context, ESCAP member States adopted the Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023-2032\(^2\) in October 2022, which identifies six priority areas of accelerated actions for disability inclusion in progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, under the overall guidance of the Incheon Strategy and the Beijing Declaration and Action Plan and in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Following the adoption of the Jakarta Declaration and the Proclamation of the fourth

\(^1\) [https://www.unescap.org/about/member-states](https://www.unescap.org/about/member-states)

\(^2\) [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/Jakarta%20Declaration-E_1.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/Jakarta%20Declaration-E_1.pdf)
Decade, the ESCAP secretariat is developing an operational guide on the implementation of the Jakarta Declaration. The operational guide is expected to further outline concrete actions and initiatives in line with the six priority areas, as well as approaches and mechanisms for multistakeholder collaboration in the implementation and progress tracking of the Jakarta Declaration. It will be a living document that would be periodically reviewed and updated based on evolving contexts in the region throughout the Decade.

Against this background, the secretariat is soliciting expert inputs from experts, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), research institutions and academia, as well as United Nations entities in the region through the following consultations:

(1) Consultations with United Nations entities on potential opportunities for interagency collaboration to support the implementation of the Jakarta Declaration (December 2022 – May 2023);
(2) An expert group meeting (scheduled for 26-27 June 2023) to solicit inputs from a core group of experts on disability inclusion which will feed into the draft operational guide;
(3) Review of the operational guide by the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (TBC).

II. Objective

The expert group meeting aims at generating substantive inputs with regard to concrete and practical actions that could be incorporated into the operational guide on the efficient implementation of the Jakarta Declaration and the six priority areas it identifies for accelerated actions towards disability-inclusive development.

While Governments of ESCAP member States bear the primary responsibility of implementing the Jakarta Declaration, OPDs, the private sector and the United Nations as well as other stakeholders also play pivotal roles. Therefore, the expert group meeting is also expected to produce ideas and suggestions with regard to strategic partnerships and technical collaboration between Governments and other critical actors, be it OPDs, the private sector, academia and the United Nations as well as other intergovernmental and international organizations.

III. Format

Participants are invited to develop recommendations with regard to concrete actions and initiatives and strategic partnerships and technical collaboration in line with the six priority areas identified in the Jakarta Declaration, for the period from 2023 through 2032. Specifically, discussions at the expert group meeting will be organized on the
following key topics:

a) Harmonize national legislations with CRPD
b) Promote meaningful participation of diverse disability groups
c) Improve accessibility to address the distinct needs of persons with disabilities
d) Galvanize the power of the private sector
e) Promote a gender-responsive life cycle approach to developing and implementing disability-related policies and programmes
f) Close disability data gaps and strengthen capacities to track progress

Concerning each topic, the following issues will be discussed:

- Key actions to be taken by Governments and relevant stakeholders
- Technical assistance required to support the implementation of this priority at the regional, subregional and national levels
- Partnership mechanisms to support the implementation of this priority at the regional, subregional and national levels

IV. Participants

The Expert Group Meeting is expected to bring together experts in disability rights and disability inclusion from Governments, OPDs, private sector entities, academia, United Nations entities and other international, regional and subregional intergovernmental and development organizations based in the Asia-Pacific region.

Following the receipt of confirmation of participation, the ESCAP secretariat will share further background information and documents as well as logistical guidance to facilitate preparation by the participants.

V. Meeting venue and reasonable accommodation

The meeting will be conducted in person in Bangkok at the United Nations Conference Centre, complemented by an online platform via Zoom.

The meeting will be conducted in English. Real-time captioning and International Sign interpretation will be provided. Other reasonable accommodation measures will be provided depending on accessibility requirements submitted by participants upon registration.

VI. Contact details for further information

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