Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Jakarta and online, 19–21 October 2022
Items 2 and 3 of the provisional agenda
Review of progress and challenges in the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, and the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific
Forward-looking policies and strategies for disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific during the period to 2030, focusing on key and emerging regional issues and opportunities

Implementation of the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific contains the world’s first set of regionally agreed upon disability-specific development goals, targets and indicators. Over the course of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, the Incheon Strategy, along with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, has guided the development and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at promoting disability-inclusive development in the region.

The present document contains a summary of the progress that has been made in the region on the implementation of the Incheon Strategy. The information presented is based on the responses received from countries and territories and from international organizations to surveys on the final review of the implementation of the Decade and on secondary sources of disability-disaggregated data. While progress in disability-inclusive development has been made, the analysis demonstrates that the Asia-Pacific region has not fully realized the Incheon Strategy goals and needs to continue to make progress to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all development efforts.

Members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific are encouraged to consider how they could accelerate the implementation of the Incheon Strategy in the coming years, building on synergies with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 16 September 2022.
** ESCAP/APDDP/2022/L.1/Rev.1.
I. Introduction

1. The Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, endorsed by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in its resolution 69/13, comprises the world’s first set of regionally agreed-upon disability-specific development goals. The 10 goals, 27 targets and 62 indicators are aimed at tracking progress towards disability-inclusive development over the course of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022. In 2017, the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy, was adopted, providing strategic guidance on the policy measures required to advance disability-inclusive development in line not only with the Incheon Strategy goals but also with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2. The year 2022 marks the end of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022. In August 2021, a survey was disseminated to ESCAP members and associate members to gather information on the overall progress made towards realizing disability rights and inclusion across the region, in particular towards achieving the Incheon Strategy goals and targets. A total of 31 countries and territories submitted responses to the ESCAP survey. Additionally, a short survey was disseminated to international organizations working in the region to gather information on their disability-inclusive programmes and policies. Eight organizations submitted responses to that survey.

3. In the Incheon Strategy, the importance of generating reliable and comparable data, both to measure the participation of persons with disabilities in development processes and to guide policymaking and programming efforts, is highlighted. However, the lack of data continues to be a key challenge in assessing disability-inclusive development. For most of the Incheon Strategy core indicators, less than 50 per cent of the respondents to the ESCAP survey provided sufficient information to enable reporting. The indicators on sexual and reproductive health, disaster risk reduction and poverty reduction received the fewest responses. Therefore, in order to present a summary of the progress made in the region to achieve the Incheon Strategy goals, reliable sources were used during desk research to supplement the government-reported data.

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1 The following members and associate members responded to the ESCAP survey: Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Cook Islands; Fiji; French Polynesia; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People’s Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Mongolia; Nauru; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Singapore; Tajikistan; Thailand; Tonga; Türkiye; Uzbekistan; and Vanuatu.

2 For example, the ILOSTAT portal of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the Global Sustainable Development Goals Indicators Database, the Disability Data Initiative of the Fordham University Research Consortium on Disability and the most recent State party reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
II. Review of the status of implementation of the Incheon Strategy goals

A. Goal 1: reduce poverty and enhance work and employment prospects

Indicator 1.1

4. Few respondents provided disability-disaggregated data on the population living below the poverty line. In the six countries and territories that provided information on this indicator in response to the ESCAP survey, the proportion of persons with disabilities living below the national poverty line ranged from 11.4 to 29.5 per cent. In four of the six countries and territories, persons with disabilities were more likely to live in poverty than persons without disabilities or the total population. Large disparities were observed in two countries and territories, with the proportion of persons with disabilities living below the poverty line being at least 15 percentage points above the proportion of persons without disabilities or the total population.

5. Poverty can be understood in broad terms as representing a disadvantage for a person’s well-being. Data from national surveys compiled through the Disability Data Initiative are used to measure the multidimensional aspects of poverty by looking at four domains: education, work, health and standard of living. Data disaggregated by sex and disability status were available for 15 countries in Asia and the Pacific. In all those countries, adults with functional difficulties were more likely to experience multidimensional poverty than adults without functional difficulties. The median percentage of adults in multidimensional poverty was 75.9 per cent for persons with functional difficulties and 61.4 per cent for persons without functional difficulties. In three countries, adults with functional difficulties were two to three times more likely to experience multidimensional poverty compared to persons without functional difficulties.

6. Women with functional difficulties faced additional challenges in overcoming multidimensional poverty. According to the Disability Data Initiative, the median percentage of women with functional difficulties in multidimensional poverty was 81.4 per cent, compared to 65.1 per cent of men with functional difficulties, 73.5 per cent of women without functional difficulties and 46.4 per cent of men without functional difficulties. In three countries, the percentage of women with functional difficulties experiencing multidimensional poverty was two to three times higher than that of women without functional difficulties. In two countries, women with functional difficulties were more than 1.5 times more likely to experience multidimensional poverty than men with functional difficulties.

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3 Disability Data Initiative, “Method brief 6 on multidimensional poverty”, available at https://disabilitydata.ace.fordham.edu/method-briefs/6-multidimensional-poverty/ (accessed on 14 April 2022); and results table on the theme “Multidimensional analysis”, available at https://disabilitydata.ace.fordham.edu/result-tables/ (accessed on 3 April 2022).

4 The term “persons with functional difficulties” refers to persons who have difficulty carrying out activities in domains such as seeing, hearing, walking, cognition, self-care and communication.
Indicator 1.2

7. The employment-to-population ratio of persons with disabilities was low across the region as a significant proportion of persons with disabilities were unemployed or outside the labour force (figure I). Disability-disaggregated data compiled by the International Labour Organization (ILO), complemented by responses to the ESCAP survey, were available for 21 countries and territories. The weighted average employment-to-population ratio was 24.3 per cent for persons with disabilities and 62.1 per cent for persons without disabilities. Persons with disabilities had lower employment-to-population ratios than persons without disabilities in all of the countries and territories except one. In 12 countries and territories, persons without disabilities were at least two times more likely to be employed than persons with disabilities.

5 ILO, ILOSTAT, Data catalogue database. Available at https://ilostat.iло.org/data/ (accessed on 3 April 2022). While some countries and territories reported on the employment-to-population ratio in their responses to the ESCAP survey, they did not provide the absolute number of persons without disabilities or used different data sources to calculate the ratio of employed persons with disabilities to the total population: In China, 43.5 per cent of persons with disabilities were employed compared with 95.8 per cent of the total population (2020); in Hong Kong, China, 17.6 per cent of persons with disabilities were employed (2020) compared with 55.5 per cent of the total population (2020, different data sources); in Pakistan, 24.0 per cent of persons with disabilities were employed compared with 36.8 per cent of the total population (2019); and, in Türkiye, 20.1 per cent of persons with disabilities were employed (2011) compared with 45.7 per cent of the total population (2019).
Figure I
Employment-to-population ratio, by disability status (latest year available)

8. According to the ILO data and the responses to the ESCAP survey, the employment-to-population ratio was lowest for women with disabilities compared to other groups. On average, the employment-to-population ratio was 17.0 per cent for women with disabilities compared to 31.3 per cent for men with disabilities, 50.0 per cent for women without disabilities and 74.7 per cent for men without disabilities. Men with disabilities were at least two times more likely to be employed than women with disabilities in six countries and territories. Women without disabilities were at least three times more likely to be employed than women with disabilities in eight countries and territories.

9. When persons with disabilities are employed, they are likely to be engaged in informal work. Data on adults in informal work compiled by the Disability Data Initiative were available for 12 countries in Asia and the Pacific. The percentage of adults with functional difficulties engaged in informal work was strikingly high, with a median of 80.1 per cent compared to 66.2 per cent for persons without functional difficulties. Persons with functional difficulties were more likely to participate in informal work than persons without functional difficulties in all 12 countries except one.

Indicator 1.3

10. Vocational training plays a significant role in preparing persons with disabilities for the labour market. In their responses to the ESCAP survey, 13 countries and territories indicated the availability of government-funded vocational training for persons with disabilities. However, in the eight countries and territories whose ministries, technical and vocational education and training institutions or employment agencies provided information, only 0.1–3.6 per cent of persons with disabilities participated in mainstream vocational training or mixed programmes.

11. Employment services create a link between job seekers and employers. Although employment services for persons with disabilities were available in at least 13 countries and territories, the limited administrative data from ESCAP survey responses indicate that persons with disabilities only account for a small proportion of the total population with access to government-funded employment support programmes. Employment agencies in five countries and territories provided information on the participation of persons with disabilities in both disability-specific and general vocational training programmes.

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6 Disability Data Initiative, results table for the theme “Work indicators”, available at https://disabilitydata.ace.fordham.edu/result-tables/ (accessed on 3 April 2022). The following countries provided data on the proportion of persons with and without disabilities in informal employment in their responses to the ESCAP survey: in Fiji, 45.2 per cent of persons with disabilities were in informal employment compared with 23.4 per cent of persons without disabilities (2017); in Indonesia, 78.8 per cent of persons with disabilities were in informal employment compared with 59.3 per cent of persons without disabilities (2020); in Maldives, 40.7 per cent of persons with disabilities were in informal employment compared with 18.7 per cent of persons without disabilities (2019); in Mongolia, 54.9 per cent of persons with disabilities were in informal employment compared with 19.8 per cent of persons without disabilities (2021); in the Republic of Korea, 59.4 per cent of persons with disabilities were in informal employment compared with 35.6 per cent of persons without disabilities (2021); and in Thailand, 74.2 per cent of persons with disabilities were in informal employment compared with 44.4 per cent of persons without disabilities (2021). Owing to differences in conceptualizing and measuring disability, data from the two sources were not compiled for analysis.

7 Some countries and territories provided information on the participation of persons with disabilities in both disability-specific and general vocational training programmes.
territories reported that 0.7 to 5.7 per cent of participants were persons with disabilities, all of whom received disability-specific services.

B. **Goal 2: promote participation in political processes and in decision-making**

**Indicator 2.1**

12. Inclusive parliaments are crucial for enabling responsive decision-making. Of the 10 survey respondents with disability-disaggregated data for this indicator, only six reported that persons with disabilities held parliamentary positions. The 19 members of parliament with disabilities (14 men and five women) represented 0.8 per cent (19 of 2,346) of the total number of parliamentarians in the 10 countries and territories. Among the six countries and territories that had parliamentarians with disabilities, the proportion of persons with disabilities among national parliamentarians ranged from 0.4 to 6.1 per cent. Three respondents reported having women parliamentarians with disabilities, representing 0.2 per cent, 0.7 per cent and 2.0 per cent of the total number of parliamentarians in the respective countries and territories.

**Indicator 2.2**

13. The national coordination mechanism on disability is a consultative and coordination body that oversees national disability policies and programmes. It usually consists of representatives of relevant government ministries, organizations of persons with disabilities and other stakeholders. 8 Disability-disaggregated data on the members of national coordination mechanisms were available for 23 countries and territories. The weighted average of members with disabilities was 18.1 per cent, ranging between 0 and 53.3 per cent. In five countries and territories, less than 10 per cent of members were persons with disabilities. In five other countries and territories, persons with disabilities represented more than 30 per cent of the total (figure II).

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8 *ESCAP Guide on Disability Indicators for the Incheon Strategy* (ST/ESCAP/2708).
Figure II
Members of national coordination mechanisms on disability, by disability status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Persons with disabilities</th>
<th>Persons without disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong, China</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Polynesia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Türkiye</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei Darussalam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ESCAP calculations based on responses to the ESCAP survey (see figure I).

Note: This is a 100 per cent stacked bar chart. The numbers in the bars represent the number of persons in the national coordination mechanisms. The x-axis refers to the percentage of national coordination mechanism members.
14. Women with disabilities were less well represented in coordination mechanisms than men with disabilities. Of the 16 countries and territories that reported having coordination mechanism members with disabilities and provided sex-disaggregated data for this indicator, women with disabilities represented 5.3 per cent of all members, compared to 14.2 per cent for men with disabilities. In all but one of the 16 countries and territories for which data were provided, male members with disabilities outnumbered female members with disabilities. In four countries and territories, no women with disabilities participated in the coordination mechanism. Moreover, in seven countries and territories, the number of men with disabilities was more than double that of women with disabilities.

15. The type of disability affected members’ level of participation in the coordination mechanism. A total of 18 respondents with coordination mechanism members with disabilities provided data for this indicator that were disaggregated by type of disability. Persons with physical disabilities accounted for 45.0 per cent of the total number of members with disabilities, followed by persons with visual disabilities (24.8 per cent), hearing disabilities (11.0 per cent), authorized representatives (10.1 per cent), 9 multiple disabilities (4.6 per cent), psychosocial disabilities (1.8 per cent) and other types of disabilities (2.8 per cent).

Indicator 2.3

16. The national machinery for gender equality and women’s empowerment refers to consultative and coordination bodies that oversee national gender policies and programmes. Of the 10 survey respondents with disability-disaggregated data for this indicator, six reported that there were no members with disabilities advocating the rights of women and girls with disabilities. Of the six, five indicated that disability inclusion was one of the aims of the national machinery for gender equality and women’s empowerment. In three of the four countries and territories that reported having members with disabilities, persons with disabilities accounted for 5 per cent or less of all members who represented women and girls with disabilities.

Indicator 2.4

17. Inaccessible polling stations restrict persons with disabilities from exercising their voting rights. Of the 16 countries and territories that provided data for this indicator, all reported having laws concerning the accessibility of polling stations and 12 reported having developed relevant technical standards. However, accessibility audit reports were available for only six countries and territories. Most of these reports covered the areas of physical and digital accessibility, the provision of reasonable accommodation and the participation of organizations of persons with disabilities. Eight countries and territories also provided information on the number and proportion of accessible polling stations. 10 The weighted average of polling stations considered accessible was 18 per cent, with considerable variations among countries and territories. While five of the eight respondents indicated that more than 85 per cent of

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9 The term “authorized representatives” refers to members of organizations of or for persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, persons with autism, persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities, among other disability groups.

10 In its response to the ESCAP survey, the Russian Federation did not provide the number of polling stations but indicated that all existing polling stations were considered accessible.
polling stations were accessible, the proportion was less than 10 per cent in the remaining three countries and territories.

C. Goal 3: enhance access to the physical environment, public transportation, knowledge, information and communication

Indicator 3.1

18. Regarding the accessibility of government buildings, relevant laws and technical standards were available in 12 of the 13 countries and territories that responded to the ESCAP survey on this indicator. At least five countries and territories had conducted accessibility audits. The laws, technical standards and accessibility audit reports often covered the availability of stable routes, accessible toilets, directional and informational signage, personal assistance and staff training, among others. Six countries and territories reported on the proportion of accessible government buildings in the national capital, with the figure being more than 80 per cent in three countries and territories and less than 10 per cent in the other three.

19. The proportion of schools with access to adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities is a good indicator of the accessibility of the built environment. Based on information from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics, the Global Sustainable Development Goals Indicators Database contained data for 22 countries and territories and three regional groupings in Asia and the Pacific under indicator 4.a.1.\(^{11}\) Stark differences were observed between subregions and between countries and territories. In Central Asia, the percentage of schools with adapted infrastructure and materials stood at 17.1 per cent at the primary level, 19.3 per cent at the lower-secondary level and 48.2 per cent at the upper-secondary level. The percentage of accessible schools was generally higher in South-East Asia (42.8 per cent at the lower-secondary level and 39.2 per cent at the upper-secondary level) and South Asia (61.2 per cent at the primary level, 66.1 per cent at the lower-secondary level and 63.6 per cent at the upper-secondary level).

Indicator 3.2

20. Although access to adequate, reliable and safe public transportation is a basic need, many persons with disabilities face difficulties in this area. In 2019, for example, the World Health Organization (WHO) found that “transportation was the most hindering aspect” of the physical environment for persons with severe disabilities in two of three surveyed countries in Asia and the Pacific.\(^{12}\)

21. Noticeable progress has been made to strengthen laws, technical standards and accessibility audits to promote the accessibility of public transportation. Regarding international airports, of the 13 countries and territories that reported on this indicator in their responses to the ESCAP survey, 11 had developed laws, nine had developed relevant technical

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\(^{11}\) United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database, available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal/database (accessed on 22 April 2022). Please note that Sustainable Development Goal indicators regional groupings are different from country groupings by ESCAP subregion. Data were not available at the primary level for South-East Asia.

standards and five had conducted accessibility audits. The weighted average of accessible international airports in the 10 countries and territories that provided data was 62.2 per cent. Moreover, 13 countries and territories reported on whether laws, technical standards and accessibility audits concerning the accessibility of bus and rapid transit systems were available. While most had laws and technical standards, 13 only three reported having conducted accessibility audits for the bus system and three having done so for the rapid transit system.

**Indicators 3.3 and 3.4**

22. Captioning and sign language interpretation services for public television news programmes enable persons with disabilities to better access information in a timely manner. Several countries and territories in the region have taken steps to enhance the accessibility of public news programmes. Nine countries and territories provided information on accessibility services in their responses to the ESCAP survey. Of the 43 reported public television channels that broadcast news programmes, the weighted average of the daily duration of accessibility services stood at 63.7 per cent for captioning and 22.0 per cent for sign language interpretation. On average, 34.4 per cent of the total daily duration of news programmes did not have accessibility services.

23. The lack of accessible public documents and websites hinders persons with disabilities from effectively receiving information and communicating with others. The findings from the ESCAP survey suggest that more efforts are needed to make public documents and websites accessible for all. Of the 13 countries and territories reporting on the availability of accessible copies of their constitutions, 10 had made the documents available in accessible DOC or PDF format and six had provided ePUB format and easy-read versions. Five countries and territories reported that their constitution was available in Braille. Of the 11 countries and territories that provided data on national government websites, only a few had accessibility features: eight had adjustable fonts, six had adjustable line spacing, four had adjustable contrast schemes, four had keyboard accessibility, four had a read-out function, four had graphic elements with alternative text and one had videos in sign language.

24. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has found that persons with functional difficulties do not own or use information and communications technology (ICT) as much as persons without functional difficulties.\(^\text{14}\) In the eight countries with data on women, the median percentage of those aged 18 to 49 years who owned a mobile telephone stood at 68.0 per cent for women with functional difficulties and 88.6 per cent for women without functional difficulties, with a gap of over 10 percentage points recorded in four countries (figure III). The median percentage of mobile telephone, computer and Internet usage\(^\text{15}\) was 80.8 per cent, 10.8 per cent and 35.3 per cent for women with functional difficulties compared to 91.8 per cent, 18.5 per cent and 48.0 per cent for women without functional difficulties. In all eight countries, for the bus system, 10 countries and territories had laws and eight had technical standards. For the rapid transit system, eight had laws and seven had technical standards.

\(^{13}\) For the bus system, 10 countries and territories had laws and eight had technical standards. For the rapid transit system, eight had laws and seven had technical standards.

\(^{14}\) UNICEF, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys database, available at https://mics.unicef.org/surveys (accessed on 2 May 2022). Surveys completed between 2017 and 2022 with published reports were included in this analysis. Some of the figures are based on 25–49 unweighted cases.

\(^{15}\) Percentage of women aged 18 to 49 years who used a mobile telephone, a computer or the Internet at least once a week during the previous three months.
the percentage of women with functional difficulties using ICT was lower than that of women without functional difficulties. The gap was of more than 10 percentage points in three countries for mobile telephone usage, of more than 10 percentage points in four countries for computer usage and of more than 15 percentage points in three countries for Internet usage.

Figure III
Percentage of women aged 18 to 49 years with and without functional difficulties who own a mobile telephone (latest year available)


Indicator 3.5

25. Access to appropriate assistive technology is a concern for many persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. The WHO publication Rehabilitation and Disability in the Western Pacific contains the findings of a survey conducted in 2015 on the status of rehabilitation and disability. Data were received from 24 countries, of which four in the East and North-East Asia subregion, 13 in the Pacific subregion and seven in the South-East Asia subregion. Sixteen countries (66.7 per cent) estimated that the proportion of persons with disabilities who needed assistive technology and had it was less than 50 per cent. Six Governments (25 per cent) indicated that the proportion was less than 25 per cent.

26. WHO also found that the capacity to deliver appropriate and affordable assistive technology was emerging in 12 countries (50 per cent), established in six countries (25 per cent) and expanding in six countries (25 per cent). The four kinds of assistive technology most commonly provided by reporting Governments were: ambulatory devices (in 23 countries), wheelchairs (in 21 countries), glasses (in 20 countries) and orthotic devices (in 20 countries). Governments were least likely to provide adapted cycles, scooters or cars (in seven countries), Braille conversion (10 countries) and communication aids (10 countries).
D. **Goal 4: strengthen social protection**

**Indicator 4.1**

27. Persons with disabilities require general and disability-specific health and rehabilitation services to facilitate healthy living and participation in all aspects of life. According to the results of the mapping exercise conducted by the ESCAP secretariat of State party reports submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 16 almost all reports included mention of a health-care and/or rehabilitation programme for persons with disabilities. 17 Such programmes included, for example, one-stop service centres in rural areas and community-based rehabilitation programmes offering services such as counselling and physical, occupational and speech therapy and providing assistive devices.

28. In a 2019 study, WHO found that in three countries in the Asia-Pacific region a lower proportion of persons with severe disabilities reported being satisfied with the availability of quality health care compared to persons without disabilities. 18 In a 2017 study, WHO found that lower- and upper-middle-income countries in the Western Pacific region had very limited rehabilitation services available and that the existing funding could not meet rehabilitation needs. To improve the affordability of health-care services, 21 countries had put some mechanism in place to reduce the cost of health care for some or all people with disabilities. Many of those mechanisms were based on eligibility for other schemes or linked to poverty status. 19

**Indicator 4.2**

29. Available data suggest that the coverage of social protection benefits is insufficient in much of the Asia-Pacific region, with a weighted average of 21.6 per cent of persons with severe disabilities receiving cash benefits. 20 Data for 40 countries and territories collected through the ILO Social Security Inquiry questionnaire show that the disability social protection benefit coverage was less than 50 per cent in 21 countries and territories. In seven countries and territories, less than 10 per cent of persons with disabilities benefited from such coverage (figure IV).

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16 The most recently available State party reports of members and associate members of ESCAP were reviewed. The number of laws and plans mentioned should not be considered as representing an exhaustive list. The reports are available from the treaty body database of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/SitePages/Home.aspx.

17 In their responses to the ESCAP survey, Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Korea reported that 18.6 per cent and 8.6 per cent of persons with disabilities used government-supported health-care programmes. Five other countries and territories provided the number of persons with disabilities using health-care programmes.

18 WHO, *Brief Model Disability Survey*.


Figure IV
Proportion of persons with severe disabilities collecting disability social protection benefits (latest year available)

Indicator 4.3

30. Supporting persons with disabilities to live independently in the community is an important aspect of ensuring respect for their inherent dignity and autonomy. In their reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, almost all States parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reported on services and programmes to enable persons with disabilities to live independently in the community. These programmes included home care services, personal assistance, peer counselling and skills training for persons with disabilities, their families and care providers.

E. Goal 5: expand early intervention and education of children with disabilities

Indicator 5.1

31. Children with functional difficulties were less likely to participate in early childhood education than children without functional difficulties. For the seven countries in the Asia-Pacific region with available data, children aged 36 to 59 months with functional difficulties attended early childhood education at a median rate of 14.4 per cent, compared to 36.9 per cent of children without functional difficulties.21 The attendance rate of children without functional difficulties was higher than that of children with functional difficulties in all of the seven countries. In three countries, children without functional difficulties were 2.5–3 times more likely to attend early childhood education than children with functional difficulties.

32. In a recent mapping of progress made towards achieving inclusive education in East Asia and the Pacific, it was found that most countries were either developing or had already implemented early childhood intervention programmes on a limited scale; however, most of the programmes were founded on the medical model of disability.22 In a similar mapping in South Asia, it was found that, while all surveyed countries had early childhood development programmes, the quality and accessibility of those programmes varied.23

Indicators 5.2 and 5.3

33. The available data suggest that school attendance rates for children with functional difficulties are much better for those aged 7 to 14 years than for those aged 36 to 59 months, but children with functional difficulties still lag behind those without functional difficulties (figure V). UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys for the 11 countries with available data have shown that children aged 7 to 14 years with functional difficulties attend school at a median rate of 93.9 per cent compared to 97.4 per cent of children without functional difficulties. Children with functional difficulties have lower rates of school attendance in nine of the 11 countries, with the gap being greater than 5 percentage points in four countries. In Samoa, the proportion of children with functional difficulties attending school is slightly higher compared to that of

21 UNICEF, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys database.
children without functional difficulties and the proportions are almost equal in Tonga.

Figure V
Proportion of children aged 7 to 14 years attending school, by functional difficulty status (latest year available)

Source: ESCAP calculations based on data from UNICEF, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys database (see figure III).

34. In a 2021 study, UNICEF found that, in most countries, children with functional difficulties had lower rates of school attendance at some point during their education. Of the 11 countries in the Asia-Pacific region that provided relevant data, eight had a disability gap in attendance for at least one level of education. The percentage of countries with a disability gap increased as the level of education also increased, from 22.2 per cent for pre-primary school, 36.4 per cent for primary school, 60.0 per cent for lower-secondary school and 87.5 per cent for upper-secondary school.24

35. The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has noted that the maintenance of special or segregated education systems is not compatible with the full realization of inclusive education outlined in article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.25 Almost all of the respondents to the ESCAP survey reported that some children with disabilities attended separate schools, demonstrating that further efforts are required to achieve inclusive education systems.


25 See the Committee’s general comment No. 4 (2016), para. 40.
F. Goal 6: ensure gender equality and women’s empowerment

Indicator 6.1

36. Women and girls with disabilities often experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on gender and disability. In the ESCAP survey and in the mapping of the most recent State party reports submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 36 countries and territories were reported to have national action plans on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities, gender-related laws or plans that mention the needs of persons with disabilities, or disability-related laws that specifically mention the needs of women. Provisions in these laws and plans include, for example: recognition that women with disabilities are vulnerable to multiple layers of discrimination and that continuous efforts are needed to address this issue; employment support for women with disabilities; and sexual and reproductive health education and services.

Indicator 6.3

37. Access to sexual and reproductive health services was one of the indicators receiving the fewest responses to the ESCAP survey. Data related to sexual and reproductive health services from UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys show a lack of access in some countries for women with functional difficulties (figure VI). In the six countries with available data, the percentage of currently married or in-union women with functional difficulties who need family planning and have their needs satisfied with modern contraceptive methods ranged from 45.3 to 81.6 per cent. In half of the countries with available data, women with functional difficulties were approximately 6 percentage points behind women without functional difficulties, while in the other half women with functional difficulties were reported as being more likely than women without functional difficulties to have their family planning needs satisfied with modern contraceptive methods.

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26 Please refer to indicator 2.1 for information on indicator 6.2 on representation in parliament.

27 UNICEF, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys database.
Figure VI
Proportion of currently married or in-union women whose family planning needs are satisfied with modern contraceptive methods, by functional difficulty status (latest year available)

Source: ESCAP calculations based on data from UNICEF, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys database (see figure III).

38. In accessing sexual and reproductive health services, women and girls with disabilities often face physical, attitudinal, information, legal and economic barriers. Furthermore, substituted decision-making and denial of personal autonomy can result in discriminatory practices such as forced sterilization, contraception and abortion.28 According to data from UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys in three countries, a smaller proportion of women with functional difficulties make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care compared to women without functional difficulties, with the gaps of less than 3 percentage points in two countries and of 12 percentage points in one.

Indicators 6.4 and 6.5

39. In their responses to the ESCAP survey and in the mapping of the most recent State party reports submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 21 countries and territories reported having programmes aimed at eliminating violence against women and girls with disabilities. Most of the programmes mentioned in the responses to the ESCAP survey focused on raising awareness, providing training and education opportunities and empowering women with disabilities. Seventeen countries and territories reported having programmes to support women and girls with disabilities who are survivors of violence and abuse. These programmes included the provision of shelters and safe homes, counselling, legal aid and training for family members.

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28 See A/72/133.
G.  **Goal 7: ensure disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management**

**Indicator 7.1**

40. Throughout the Asia-Pacific region, persons with disabilities are explicitly mentioned in many disaster risk reduction frameworks, including laws, policies, strategies and plans. According to the information available at the Women’s Resilience to Disasters Policy Tracker of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)\(^{29}\) and the responses to the ESCAP survey, at least 26 countries and territories in the region have developed disaster risk reduction frameworks inclusive of persons with disabilities. In addition, at least three countries and territories have formulated disability-specific disaster risk reduction laws and policies.

41. The number of countries with a national disaster risk reduction strategy aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030\(^{30}\) is another indicator of the availability of inclusive disaster risk reduction frameworks in the region. Data on Sustainable Development Goals indicators 1.5.3, 11.b.1 and 13.1.2 show that 12 countries in Central and South Asia, 10 countries in East and South-East Asia and 14 countries in Oceania have such national disaster risk reduction strategies.\(^{31}\) Scoring the status of adoption and implementation of national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework provides further information on a country’s capacity to ensure inclusive disaster risk reduction and management. A total of 42 countries in Asia and the Pacific have assessed the status of implementation and have scored, on average, 0.67 points on a scale between 0 and 1. A total of 20 countries have reported having achieved substantial or comprehensive alignment with the Sendai Framework (scoring at least 0.75 points). And, in six countries, there was no or limited implementation of national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework (scoring at most 0.25 points).

**Indicator 7.2**

42. In their responses to the ESCAP survey, six countries and territories reported having made available disaster risk reduction training. Five of the six respondents indicated that disability-inclusive curricula were available. Persons with disabilities were consulted in preparing training programmes in Fiji, Mongolia and Thailand. In its mapping of the most recent State party reports submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ESCAP found that disability-related training in disaster risk reduction was available in at least 10 more countries. These training programmes are aimed at equipping persons with disabilities with disaster risk reduction knowledge and at raising the awareness of disaster risk reduction service personnel on disability issues.

\(^{29}\) See [https://wrd.unwomen.org/policy-tracker#map-table](https://wrd.unwomen.org/policy-tracker#map-table).

\(^{30}\) In line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, which was adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015, disaster risk reduction practices need to be inclusive in order to be efficient and effective.

\(^{31}\) United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database. Please note that Sustainable Development Goal indicators regional groupings are different from country groupings by ESCAP subregion.
Indicator 7.3

43. Data on the proportion of emergency shelters and disaster relief sites that are accessible to persons with disabilities are available for five countries and territories, where the proportion was less than 40 per cent in two, almost 80 per cent in one and 100 per cent in the remaining two. Eight countries and territories reported having laws concerning the accessibility of emergency shelters and disaster relief sites and six countries and territories indicated having relevant technical standards. Only three countries and territories reported having conducted accessibility audits. The laws, technical standards and accessibility audits generally covered diverse aspects, such as the physical environment, information and communication technologies, services to facilitate reasonable accommodation and the participation of organizations of persons with disabilities.

H. Goal 8: improve the reliability and comparability of disability data

Indicator 8.1

44. An estimated 15 per cent of the world’s population lives with some level or form of disability. This translates into more than 700 million people in Asia and the Pacific.\(^32\) Owing to differences in the conceptualization and measurement of disability, prevalence estimates vary significantly across the region. Based on their responses to the ESCAP survey and official government data, the median disability prevalence among the 58 members and associate members of ESCAP stood at 4.5 per cent, ranging from 0.8 to 26.0 per cent.\(^33\) In four countries and territories, the prevalence was higher than 15.0 per cent. The rate was 5.0 per cent or below in 34 countries and territories (table 1). The low disability prevalence could result from the use of outdated data collection tools and procedures, differences in defining disability based on data obtained and the exclusion of persons living in residential care facilities from surveys, among other factors.\(^34\)

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\(^{32}\) The figure was calculated as 15 per cent of the estimated regional population at midyear 2021. See WHO, World Report on Disability (Geneva, 2011); and ESCAP, “ESCAP population data sheet”, available at www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/knowledge-products/Pop_data_sheet2021_20211230.pdf.

\(^{33}\) Owing to the lack of data, disability prevalence in Armenia and Turkmenistan was estimated on the basis of the number of registered persons with disabilities and the number of persons receiving disability benefits as reported to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

\(^{34}\) UNICEF, “Producing disability-inclusive data: why it matters and what it takes” (New York, 2020).
Table 1
Disability prevalence as reported by ESCAP members and associate members (latest year available)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability prevalence</th>
<th>Number of countries and territories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater than 15.0 per cent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1 per cent to 15.0 per cent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 per cent to 10.0 per cent</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 per cent to 5.0 per cent</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 2.5 per cent</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ESCAP calculations based on responses to the ESCAP survey and official government data.

45. Sex-disaggregated data on disability prevalence were available for 48 countries and territories. The median prevalence stood at 4.3 per cent for men and 4.4 per cent for women. The disability prevalence of women was higher than that of men in 26 countries and territories, while men had a higher prevalence in 19 countries and territories. The difference in disability prevalence between men and women was less than 1 percentage point in 36 countries and territories.

46. Disability prevalence generally increased significantly with age. Of the 16 countries and territories that reported on this indicator in their responses to the ESCAP survey, the median prevalence of persons aged under 65 years was 2.7 per cent compared to 17.4 per cent for persons aged 65 years and over. In 11 countries and territories, persons aged 65 years and over were five times more likely to live with disabilities than persons aged under 65 years. In four of those 11 countries and territories, the disability prevalence of persons aged 65 years and over was more than 10 times as high as that of persons under 65 years of age.

47. Persons living in rural areas were reportedly more likely to live with disabilities than persons living in urban areas. Of the 12 countries and territories that provided data disaggregated by geographical area in their responses to the ESCAP survey, the median disability prevalence was 5.5 per cent for persons in rural areas and 3.8 per cent for those in urban areas. In all countries and territories except two, persons residing in rural areas were more likely to live with disabilities than persons in urban areas, with a median gap of 1.3 percentage points among these 12 countries and territories.

Indicators 8.2 and 8.3

48. Many countries and territories experience difficulties in producing quality statistics on disability for the purposes of policymaking and programming. In 2021, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) conducted a survey on disability data in the Asia-Pacific region and received
The findings of the survey suggest that, while 16 of the 20 respondents had collected disability data or planned to do so in their upcoming censuses, only nine could produce and report on more than one third of the Incheon Strategy indicators based on their most recent censuses or surveys.

49. Questions on disability were reportedly included in the censuses of 13 of the 20 reporting countries, in the household income and expenditure surveys of 7 of 14 reporting countries, in the labour force surveys of five of 13 reporting countries, in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys of eight of 10 reporting countries and in the Demographic and Health Surveys carried out in four of nine reporting countries. Many countries asked questions about disability rather than questions on functioning to determine disability status, raising concerns about the reliability and comparability of disability data. Only five of the 20 respondents to the UNFPA survey used or planned to use the Washington Group short set of questions on functioning. Regarding data on barriers and enablers for persons with disabilities, seven UNFPA survey respondents reported that they had produced or planned to publish disability reports containing information on access to employment and five respondents reported doing so in respect of access to education.

I. Goal 9: accelerate the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the harmonization of national legislation with the Convention

Indicator 9.1

50. As of 31 July 2022, 45 of the 51 members and associate members of ESCAP in Asia and the Pacific with treaty-making capacities had ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Four others had signed but not yet ratified the Convention. The Optional Protocol to the Convention had been ratified or acceded by 12 members and one associate member. Five members and associate members had signed but not ratified it.

51. In a recent study, ESCAP found that, as part of their obligation to take legislative, administrative and other measures to give effect to the Convention, at least 41 Governments in the Asia-Pacific region had undertaken reviews of their legislation to improve alignment with the Convention, with 31 of those reviews leading to amendments to domestic legislation. Some of the States parties to the Convention that have not undertaken reviews consider that their existing laws already conform to the Convention; others, such as Uzbekistan, have become parties to the Convention only recently. Experience gained by States parties that have completed reviews thus far suggests that discrimination is widespread in national legislation and other legal instruments.

35 UNFPA, “Are persons with disabilities included in the effort to leave no-one behind? Mapping disability data in development in Asia and the Pacific” (Bangkok, 2022).
Indicator 9.2

52. In their responses to the ESCAP survey, 22 countries and territories reported having national anti-discrimination legislation to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities. Twenty of those countries and territories shared information about at least one disability-specific law, while the other two shared information only about general laws that also covered persons with disabilities. Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have adopted or amended legislation to prohibit discrimination. However, several of the amended pieces of legislation do not meet the requirements of all aspects of article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities or of general comment No. 6 (2018) of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on equality and non-discrimination (article 5 of the Convention).38

J. Goal 10: advance subregional, regional and interregional cooperation

Indicators 10.1–10.3

53. The Asia-Pacific multi-donor trust fund, which was established in 1993, has supported the work of ESCAP during the three disability decades. The financial support has enabled ESCAP to provide additional capacity-building, advocacy, research and technical advisory services, as well as promote the full participation of persons with disabilities in ESCAP meetings. During the period 2013–2022, the Governments of Australia, China and the Republic of Korea and the Nippon Foundation of Japan have donated a total of $253,320 to the trust fund. During the same period, the Governments of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, the Nippon Foundation and Rehabilitation International have donated $3,814,924 to ESCAP disability projects (table 2).

38 Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Contribution to the Asia-Pacific multi-donor trust fund</th>
<th>Contribution to ESCAP disability projects</th>
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<td>Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>China</td>
<td>10 000</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>50 000</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nippon Foundation</td>
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<td>87 300</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Rehabilitation International</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 814 924</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indicators 10.4–10.7

54. ESCAP received survey responses from the regional offices of the following eight international organizations or entities: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); UNESCO; UNFPA; UNICEF; the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction; United Nations Resident Coordinator Office for Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu; World Food Programme; and WHO. All of the survey respondents reported having mandates, policies or action plans on disability-inclusive development and seven of the eight respondents reported having a dedicated and experienced focal point on disability-inclusive development. Most of the respondents reported that their organizations placed a high priority (six respondents) or very high priority (one respondent) on disability-inclusive development, while one reported a moderate level of priority.

55. Most of the organizations shared information on programmes aimed at increasing the accessibility of services for persons with disabilities, including by creating accessible reading materials, working with Governments to improve the accessibility of health services and conducting accessibility audits of facilities and operations. The organizations also reported hosting advocacy, awareness-raising and training events, developing guidance and standards relating to disability inclusion, conducting research to better understand the needs of persons with disabilities and engaging in partnerships with organizations of persons with disabilities.

Indicators 10.8–10.10

56. All the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks of ESCAP members and associate members mention disability\textsuperscript{39} and many of them also include indicators that specifically require disaggregation by disability status, such as those on employment and poverty, social protection coverage, inclusive decision-making, satisfaction with public services and participation in mainstream schools and early education.

III. Conclusion

57. The review of the status of implementation of the Incheon Strategy reveals that, although progress has been made towards achieving disability-inclusive development, persons with disabilities continue to face challenges in almost all sectors of society throughout the Asia-Pacific region. The analysis, which has been complemented with data from ESCAP survey responses and secondary data sources, suggests that the Asia-Pacific region is not on track to meet most of the Incheon Strategy goals and targets.

58. In order to “make the right real” for persons with disabilities, members and associate members of ESCAP will need to continue to work with diverse disability groups and relevant stakeholders to collect and use disability-disaggregated data for evidence-based policymaking. Members and associate members may want to consider how they can continue to build on the progress made so far in respect of the Incheon Strategy goals and how this work can be

\textsuperscript{39} See https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/cooperation-framework. As of 31 May 2022, Cooperation Frameworks were available in English for 14 members and associate members of ESCAP. An additional 13 members and associate members are also included in the United Nations Pacific Strategy 2018–2022.
linked to efforts to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda.

IV. Issues for consideration

59. In view of the progress made and the gaps remaining in relation to implementing the Incheon Strategy, members and associate members of ESCAP may wish to discuss the following topics:

(a) Good practices, innovative approaches and lessons learned on the implementation of the Incheon Strategy;

(b) Accelerated actions to implement the Incheon Strategy in synergy with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda;

(c) Means and ways of systematically collecting data to enable improved reporting on the indicators associated with the Incheon Strategy goals and the Sustainable Development Goals.