

Workshop on “The Right to Social Protection: from Traditional Disability Welfare to Social Inclusion”

30 November 2018

**Conference Room 4, United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC)
Bangkok, Thailand**

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Background

To “leave no one behind” is a clarion call of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This call is deeply engrained in all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). None of the SDGs can be achievable without empowering those who are the furthest behind in development opportunities and ensuring their full participation.

In Asia and the Pacific, an estimated 690 million people, accounting for 15 per cent of the total population in the region, live with some form of disability. They are identified as a disadvantaged and vulnerable group, as many of them are excluded from accessing opportunities and benefiting from social, economic and environmental development outcomes on an equal basis with their peers without disabilities. They continue to face multiple barriers that prevent them from fully and effectively participating in society. These barriers cover the full spectrum of human rights development, including social stigmatisation, inaccessibility of the physical infrastructure and information, and the lack of inclusive legal, institutional or policy measures.

Social protection is an essential condition for social and economic development for all, particularly for those who experience poverty and social exclusion. Well-designed and rights-based social protection programmes ensure equal and effective access to basic social services, such as food, healthcare, education and support, and contribute to fostering social inclusion and participation. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) represents a major step towards disability-inclusive social protection by recognizing for the first time the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living and social protection, and creating an obligation for States Parties to take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities receive an equal access to mainstream social protection programmes and services (Article 28). Moving beyond traditional disability-welfare considerations towards a complex equality and human rights-based model, the Convention also covers the right of persons with disabilities to live independently and to be included in the community (Article 19), respect for home and the family (Article 23), habilitation and rehabilitation (Article 26), work and employment (Articles 27), and highlights the interdependence and indivisibility of all human rights.

Building upon the CRPD, the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific and the Beijing Declaration and Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy encourage enhancing of both disability-specific and disability-inclusive social protection schemes including among others personal assistance and peer counselling services (Goal 4). A key finding from the 2017 midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities 2013-2022 indicates that more governments in the region have started recognizing the need for personal assistance and peer counselling services as part of social protection measures required by persons with disabilities, and that disability inclusion in existing social protection packages should be improved to reach a larger population of persons with disabilities who are still left uncovered by government social services such as health care.

Against this background, the Social Development Division of ESCAP is organizing a workshop with the theme “The Right to Social Protection: from Traditional Disability Welfare to Social Inclusion” to discuss a wide range of issues pertaining to social protection for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.

II. Objectives of the Workshop

The main objective of the Workshop on “The Right to Social Protection: from Traditional Disability Welfare to Social Inclusion” is to enhance ESCAP member States’ understanding of the design and implementation of inclusive social protection policies, programmes and services targeting at persons with diverse disabilities.

For this purpose, the key issues to be addressed in the Workshop will be:

1. Social protection or service needs of persons with diverse disabilities to increase their participation in society: from the perspectives of persons with disabilities
2. Good practices in social protection provision: from the perspectives of policymakers in the region
3. What are the challenges faced in developing and implementing social protection schemes for persons with disabilities, and how can we overcome these challenges?

III. Expected outcomes of the Workshop

The discussion and feedback received from the Workshop on good practices, challenges and lessons learnt from the design and implementation of social protection policies, programmes and services for persons with disabilities will inform the Asia-Pacific region’s knowledge base and provide substantive inputs to a forthcoming ESCAP publication on inclusive social protection schemes for the vulnerable.

IV. Organizational arrangements and participation

The Workshop will be organized on 30 November 2018 at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), located in Bangkok, Thailand, in conjunction with the fifth session of the Committee on Social Development (CSD) to be held at the same venue from 28 to 30 November 2018.

The Workshop is expected to be attended by a group of experts with mixed skills in social protection policies and programmes from governments, civil society organizations and the

academia. In addition, participants in the fifth session of the CSD will be invited to attend on a voluntary basis.

Experts are to be selected by ESCAP from a pool of expertise in social protection available in Asia and the Pacific. The ESCAP secretariat will provide experts with a round-trip air ticket from their place of residence to Bangkok by the most economical route as well as a daily subsistence allowance (DSA) at the established United Nations rate for the duration of the fifth session of the CSD.

The invited experts are required to submit to the secretariat a completed participation form and their CV. They are also required to register online for the fifth session of the Committee on Social Development by logging in at: <http://meetings.unescap.org>.

The Workshop will be conducted in English with Thai and Sign language interpretation.

V. Structure of the Workshop

The Workshop will take place on the morning of 30 November, from 1000 till 1230 hrs. After the opening, there will be an hour-long presentation by a group of experts on key issues of social protection. Then, a break-out group discussion will follow to discuss the challenges and solutions in designing and implementing social protection schemes for persons with disabilities. Thereafter, groups will report back to the panel for further discussion and conclusion.

V. Contacts of the ESCAP secretariat

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Annex - Biographies of Panelists



Mr Suporntum Mongkolsawadi is Secretary General at Redemptorist Foundation for People with Disabilities, overseeing several service projects for people with disabilities, including: Redemptorist Technological College for People with Disabilities, Job Placement Agency for People with Disabilities, Centre for Social Enterprise Promotion, Father Ray School for Children with Special Needs and 1479 Hotline Call Center providing information and advice regarding persons with disabilities. He is also Former Principal of Redemptorist Vocational School for People with Disabilities and is now an active advocate promoting accessibility, tourism, sports, and media for persons with disabilities.



Ms Kaewkul Tantipisitkul is Secretary General of the National Association of The Deaf in Thailand (NADT)¹, the representative organisation for the Deaf in Thailand². She has also co-authored various publications on rehabilitation for persons with disabilities in Thailand. Prior to joining NADT, Ms Tantipisitkul was networking officer at Asia Pacific Development Centre on Disability. She holds a Master of Science degree in Mental Health and a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.



Ms Eva Rahmi Kasim is Senior Policy Analyst at the Planning Bureau, Ministry of Social Affairs, Republic of Indonesia. Having graduated from Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia, with both a Postgraduate Diploma and Master of Disability Studies, she has developed a strong expertise in the field of disability³.

¹ <http://nadt.or.th/en/board>

² <http://nadt.or.th/en/history>

³ <http://www.deakin.edu.au/alumni/where-are-they-now/eva-rahmi-kasim>



Mr Phuntsho Wangyel is Chief of Research and Evaluation Division at Gross National Happiness Commission of Bhutan. His responsibilities include reviewing and overseeing policies that cover crosscutting issues. He also coordinates activities related to vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities. He has been extensively involved in the formulation of the National Pension and Provident Fund Policy, and currently leads the formulation of the Bhutan's first national policy for persons with disabilities.

Mr Wangyel holds a post-graduate diploma and master's degree in International and Development Economics from the Australian National University, along with a BA (Honours) Economics from Delhi University, India.



Mr K. Vikram Simha Rao is Director and Senior Government Official in India's Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, with over 15 years of experience in policy and planning for health and disability. Through active collaboration with relevant governmental and non-governmental actors, his contributions include the formulation of a legislation in line with the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a roadmap for the achievement of the Incheon Strategy and Sustainable Development Goals and the creation of a web-based National Database which provides a Unique Disability Identification (UDID) card to persons with disabilities in India.



Dr Michael Palmer is Senior Lecturer at the University of Western Australia Business School. His research interests lie predominantly in disability, health and social protection in the Southeast Asian region, including Vietnam, Cambodia and the Philippines⁴. His most recent publication on standard of living in Cambodia raises the need for governments to provide support for the additional costs of living with disabilities⁵.

⁴ <https://research-repository.uwa.edu.au/en/persons/michael-palmer>

⁵ Michael Palmer, Jenny Williams & Barbara McPake (2018) Standard of Living and Disability in Cambodia, The Journal of Development Studies.