

Asia Pacific Disability Constituency 10th APFSD Statement, 2023

Asia and the Pacific region's progress depends upon the urgent actions required, not only to identify, but to bring the furthest behind to the forefront of decision-making spaces and strategically positioning itself through an equity centered leadership, strengthening partnerships and transforming rights based policies into implementation at all levels within each sub region towards accelerating inclusive development and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This is emphasized in Goal 10 "Reduce inequality within and among countries".

As global imperative it is, "With us Not for us".

Long standing disparity faced by persons with disabilities reflects significantly in the inequality of opportunities within the development sphere such as access to basic health care, clean water and sanitation, clean energy, quality education, decent work, financial inclusion, as well as other services which can potentially lead to their socio-economic empowerment opportunities to participate equally within their communities. From available data, in the Asia-Pacific region, 21.6% of people with severe disabilities receive disability cash benefits.¹

We urge all Governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, academia, communities and individuals at all levels to strengthen cross sectoral collaboration and work in tandem with various organizations of persons with disabilities, using twin track approach, to ensure persons with disabilities, in particular, women, children and young persons with disabilities are not an afterthought but remain at the heart of the matter and pre-conditions to inclusion, such as accessibility, assistive devices, social protection, support services, community based inclusive development (CBID) and non-discrimination are adhered to as prerequisite for the full implementation of the 2030 agenda. If these preconditions are not realized, inclusion of all persons with disabilities will be drastically undermined across all stages of development, widening the gap further and leaving them behind.

Political will, disability disaggregated data, adequate resourcing genuine commitment through cooperation, well-coordinated action and partnerships are also key elements.

Addressing the barriers faced by persons with disabilities, presents a unique opportunity to leverage partnerships right across from global to community level, and collectively design, implement disability-inclusive development in consultation with and for persons with disabilities towards accelerating recovery from the Coronavirus disease. It requires us to put persons with disabilities at the core as fundamental contributors in the planning, implementation, response and

¹International Labour Organization (ILO), 2021, *World Social Protection Report 2020-22: Social Protection at the Crossroads – In Pursuit of a Better Future*, Geneva.

monitoring, thus prohibiting any form of discrimination, placing particular emphasis on intersectionality and diversity of the disability community.

Below are key recommendations as building blocks to accelerating recovery:

- Ensure preconditions for meaningful consultation with and active participation of all persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in all stages of project development, VNR and UPR reporting.
- The upcoming SDG Summit in September 2023 and Summit for the Future in 2024 are important opportunities to ensure participation and inclusion of **people with disabilities**, including women, children and youth with disabilities,
- Ensure mainstreaming disability in national development and planning, with targeted actions including prioritization, collection and use of disability disaggregated data to support in designing inclusive social protection schemes, policies, budgets and in allocating adequate resources. There must also be a commitment to improve data for measuring SDG progress and inform policy making.
- Ensure universal design, accessible infrastructure, services, programs, information, communication and technology. Accessibility

Diversity, equity and inclusion of persons with disabilities is pivotal to achieving the pledge to leave no one behind, and a critical test of accountability to the global commitments of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2030 Agenda, United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, Jakarta Declaration, 2022, Marrakesh Treaty, 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Sendai Framework and the Incheon Strategy Strengthening the 2030 Agenda.