**Consultative Forum on Global Strategy for DiDRR: next steps for the Sendai Commitment**

**At the occasion of 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction**

**16:30-18:00, 23 May 2017, Cancun, Mexico**

**Summary**

The Division for Social Policy and Development of United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DSPD/UN-DESA), UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction(UNISDR), CBM, the ATDO (Assistive Technology Development Organization), the Nippon Foundation the Rehabilitation International, organized a Consultative Forum under the theme “Global Strategy for DiDRR: next steps for the Sendai Commitment” on 23 May, 2017 in Cancun, Mexico. Approximately 50 participants from various sectors including Member States, Private Sector, Civil Society, and Academia institutions attended. The purpose of the forum was to share the progress made of the implementation of the Sendai Framework since its adoption including concrete examples of disability-inclusion activities and discuss the way forward. This forum was moderated by Dr. Hiroshi Kawamura, Vice President, Assistive Technology Development Organization, Japan.

In the opening, Ms. Akiko Ito, Chief, Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, DSPD/UN-DESA provided the background and purpose of this event. Ms. Ito noted that this forum will be a platform for participants to share the progress made of Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) in the context of the implementation of Sendai Framework, and to discuss barriers they encountered and the possible way forward. She also emphasized the importance of integrating DiDRR into strategies at global, regional, and national levels and the need for DiDRR to be translated into practice.

Ms. Stefanie Dannenmann-Di Palma, Deputy Head of Office, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction(UNISDR), made a presentation on the status of disability inclusive disaster risk reduction since the adoption of the Sendai Framework. Ms. Dannenmann recalled the last 25 years of international commitment on disaster risk reduction and explained that ‘disability’ was only mentioned recently in the context of inclusiveness. She emphasized the need for linking with DiDRR with the indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular, SDG 1 on Poverty Reduction, SDG 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities, and SDG 13 on climate change. Targets of the Sendai Framework and indicators SDGs are interlinked. For example, target A of Sendai Framework “Substantially reduce global disaster mortality by 2030, aiming to lower the average per 100,000 global mortality rate in the decade 2020–2030 compared to the period 2005-2015” is linked to SDG1 (Target 1.5), SDG11 (Target 11.5), and SDG13 (Target 13.1). Ms. Dannenmann noted the importance of disaggregated data and provided an example of good practice in Italy where it took an inclusive approach to data through its Adapt database. Another good example is Armenia, where 20 persons with disabilities are employed in 911 service.

Mr. Gordon Rattray, Emergency Communications Coordinator, CBM International Emergency Response Unit, spoke on the linkage between poverty and disability. Mr. Rattray explained that persons with disabilities are more exposed to poverty as they are most likely to be excluded from education, healthcare, and work training, which are the opportunities that could help them out of poverty. He stressed the need to end this negative cycle of poverty and disability and to work for inclusion of persons with disabilities across all areas of development. Enhancing accessibility to hospitals and shelters is crucial, as in some areas, it is not always accessible for persons with disabilities due to stigma associated with their disabilities. Mr. Rattray emphasized the need to ensure that persons with disabilities are meaningfully engaged in the DiDRR including decision making process and training on disaster risk management. For example, in Bangladesh, people with disabilities were recognized as a valuable resource in mainstreaming DiDRR and helped communities.

Dr. Derrick L. Cogburn, Associate Professor of International Relations, School of International Service, American University, highlighted the opportunities that can help converge norms, standards, and rules on the global governance on DiDRR. The opportunities include but not limited to, the Conference of States Parties (COSP) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the High-level Political Forum, the central platform for follow-up on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. Before a global conference, stakeholders need to coordinate and collaborate on drafting language, developing strategy, preparing position papers, and lobbying. During the conference, it is important to network, build partnerships, and keeping the community informed, and after the conference ensure to follow-up and the implementation. Dr. Cogburn introduced some examples of cyberinfrastructure to enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities, such as collaborate ultra interface and captioning for participants attending a meeting remotely and double robots that allows mobile remote presence.

Ms. Hiroko Awano, Social Innovation Program Division, Disability and Child Welfare Team, the Nippon Foundation: inclusive society and DiDRR, showed a video of disaster drill involving persons with disabilities conducted in tsunami-prone Beppu City, Ōita Prefecture in Japan. The video showed the local residents sharing opinions with local authorities and other stakeholders, and helping persons with disabilities in evacuation. This drill allowed participants to learn accommodating different needs of persons with disabilities and to recognize the importance of collaboration between persons with disabilities and people without disabilities in case of disaster. Dr. Shigeo Tsuki, Doshisha University, noted the importance of evidence-based approach and explained that the outcome of such drill needs to be defined and translated into numbers (a scale that measures differences before and after an experiment). In case of this disaster drill in Beppu City, the study showed that the higher level of awareness on disaster risks and evacuation plans contribute to enhance self-confidence of persons with disabilities hence linked to the successful outcome of the evacuation.

Mr. Mathieu Simard, Faculty Lecturer, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, the Rehabilitation International highlighted that climate change impacts such as increase of frequency of disasters make persons with disabilities more vulnerable. These are compounded by ongoing social, economic and political challenges, resulting in humanitarian crises. Mr. Simard said that there is a need for an inclusive integrated approach to climate change adaptation, humanitarian response and international development work. To ensure inclusive data management in order to inform practices, data collection and indicators must put emphasis on data disaggregation by sex, age and disability. To successfully enhance resilience of persons with disabilities, not only do their participation and accessibilities need to be secured, but also non-discrimination approach should be taken and stigma needs to be addressed. In addition, capacity building activities and effective advocacy need to be in place. Mr. Simard noted that above all, togetherness, inclusiveness and allyship are key for success.

In the open discussion, some participants noted that women and children with disabilities need more attention as they are severely impacted by adverse impact of climate change. DiDRR is a cross-cutting issue and should be mainstreamed in other sectors. The connectivity and accessibility for people in rural areas are required to ensure inclusiveness. Securing safety of persons with disabilities in a rescue shelter is also significant. One speaker said that utilizing traditional knowledge in the communities would save lives. One participant shared a good example of a project in Bangladesh where a disability-inclusive rescue exercise was conducted and community-risk assessment and action plan involving persons with disabilities was carried out. Such good practice could be a good material for DiDRR advocacy.

Effort has been made for raising awareness on DiDRR, however, stigma against persons with disability remains a major obstacle in achieving inclusiveness, and is difficult to quantify. The importance of DiDRR should be translated into numbers as the scientific evidence on impact of effectiveness of DiDRR could convince policy makers. In addition, it is crucial to operationalize all ideas, including by using technologies, knowledge, and networks, to be able to have impact on decision-making process in developing new strategies and plans.