**Concept Note**

**Networking Workshop: Advancing the Leadership of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Development and Society**

Side Event

Sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 2017

**Tuesday, 14 March 2017, from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm,**

**CR S-2727, Secretariat Building, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

**Introduction**

The Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SCRPD) of the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) will co-organize a side event with Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations, with co-sponsorship from the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations, the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, UN Women, United Nations Population Fund, Women Enabled International, and Women’s Refugee Commission under the theme “Advancing the Leadership of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Development and Society”, under the main CSW theme of “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work”.

The side event, a networking workshop, will bring together a diverse network of individuals to share their experiences in strengthening the leadership of women with disabilities in development and society. Currently, women and girls, especially those from crisis-affected communities, continue to be left behind in both development and humanitarian action. The workshop is being organised in response to the critical need for the international community to promote dialogue between regional and national experts and identify strategies and actions to empower women and girls with disabilities, and ensure their participation and leadership in the implementation of the of internationally agreed development goals and other commitments, and the full realization of their human rights.

The workshop is expected to contribute to the “operationalisation” of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and other international development strategies, in a way that is inclusive of and responsive to the leadership and agency of women and girls with disabilities. Building on existing experiences and good practices, it will continue to explore how multi-stakeholder partnerships could further advance gender equality and the leadership of woman and girls with disabilities in development and society.

**Objectives**

The workshop will:

* Exchange experiences and take stock of progress in promoting existing measures and mechanisms to further the leadership of women and girls with disabilities, including existing technical assistance programmes, funding mechanisms and mainstreaming efforts;
* Identify options for next steps for the United Nations system, Member States, the private sector and civil society, to amplify the leadership of women with disabilities and address persistent barriers to their empowerment by building synergies between gender equality and disability inclusion, addressing the intersectionality of gender and disability, and mainstreaming gender equality and disability in the operationalization of the 2030 Agenda; and
* Explore new ideas to strengthen networks of women and girls with disabilities, drawing on experiences of women leaders with disabilities and partner organizations.

**Expected Outcome**

The workshop will engage experts, advocates and policy makers, particularly those with experience in the fields of disability, women’s rights, gender equality and empowerment of women, social and economic development, to share their experiences in strengthening the leadership of women with disabilities in development and society. Recognizing women and girls with disabilities as agents of change, the workshop will contribute to the “operationalization” of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and other internationally agreed development agendas, in a way that is inclusive of and responsive to the leadership of women and girls with disabilities. The outcome of the meeting will inform an upcoming report of the Secretary-General on the situation of women and girls with disabilities, to be submitted to the seventy-second session of the General Assembly.

**Organization of Work**

The Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SCRPD) of the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), in collaboration with UN Women, and Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations, with co-sponsorship from the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations, the Department for International Development (DFID) of United Kingdom, United Nations Population Fund, Women Enabled International, Women’s Refugee Commission [others to be confirmed], will organize the networking workshop at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, under the main CSW meetings.

The workshop will include short presentations by 3-4 discussants and immediately open the floor for sharing of experiences by participants.

The participants will include representatives of Government, United Nations system, the civil society organizations—including women’s organisations and organisations of women with disabilities—and the private sector.

**Possible Guiding Questions**

* Discuss the goal and objectives, as well as main activities of your organisations that focus on/contribute to the leadership of women and girls with disabilities in humanitarian actions, development and society.
* Examples and good practice of policy programmes/projects have succeeded in promoting the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities against the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda. What specific roles were played by government/policy makers/your organisation in that particular exemplar case?
* In order to advance your work in the field of promoting the rights/leadership of women and girls with disabilities, what is urgently needed? And how the international community, including the United Nations entities, can help?

**Speakers**

* Hon. Gabriela Troiano, Member of Parliament, Argentina
* Commissioner for Gender Equality Nomasonto Grace Mazibuko (South Africa) and Executive Director and Founder of the Albinism Society of South Africa (ASSA) – Confirmed
* Professor Mitsuko Horiuchi (Japan), Visiting Professor at Bunkyo Gakuin University Graduate School of Foreign Studies - Confirmed
* Ms. Nidhi Goyal, activist: disability rights and gender justice; and disability policy advisor: CREA