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## Commission for Social Development

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups**

## **Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda towards 2015 and beyond**

### **Report of the Secretary-General**

#### *Summary*

The present report was prepared pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/28, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report to the Commission for Social Development at its fifty-second session on the progress made in mainstreaming disability into the development agenda towards 2015 and beyond. At this critical juncture in building a post-2015 development framework, the outcome document recently adopted by the General Assembly at its high-level meeting on disability and development (General Assembly resolution 68/3) has provided an impetus to promote disability-inclusive development and to ensure the role of persons with disabilities as agents and beneficiaries of the sustainable and inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond.

The report elaborates on the interlinkages between disability and the attainment of global development objectives across a wide spectrum of development issues relating to economic, social and environmental factors. In addition, the report analyses the current trends and challenges in the four key areas for action recommended in the outcome document of the high-level meeting: (a) national policies, plans and strategies to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities; (b) disability data and statistics, monitoring and evaluation; (c) promoting accessibility for all; and (d) international cooperation and the mobilization of resources. The report concludes by providing recommendations for action and concrete steps for mainstreaming disability in accordance with the conclusions that emerged from the high-level meeting.



## I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2013, adopted resolution 2013/28, in which it requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Commission for Social Development, at its fifty-second session, on the progress made in mainstreaming disability into the development agenda towards 2015 and beyond.

2. As the 2015 deadline for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals draws near, the international community is at a critical juncture as regards building a post-2015 development framework underpinned by the principles of equality, inclusion and sustainability. In this context, on 23 September 2013, the General Assembly convened a high-level meeting on disability and development, under the theme: “The way forward: a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond”. This was the first high-level meeting of the General Assembly held at the level of heads of States and Governments, in the history of the United Nations, with the aim of adopting international commitments specifically on issues related to persons with disabilities and development.

3. The current development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals, does not specifically include disability in its goals nor in their related targets and indicators. The high-level meeting provided an extraordinary opportunity to guide the international community in addressing this significant concern and ensuring that persons with disabilities assume their rightful role, as agents and beneficiaries, in all aspects of the development agenda and efforts towards 2015 and beyond.

4. The processes leading up to the high-level meeting resulted in a concise, action-oriented document on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development Goals for persons with disabilities. The outcome document (General Assembly resolution 68/3) stresses the importance of giving due consideration to disability and persons with disabilities in the emerging post-2015 development agenda. It provides a global framework for a disability-inclusive post-2015 development agenda and sets out a series of follow-up actions in the following areas: accessibility, health care, social protection and employment, humanitarian programming and responses, disability data and statistics, and international cooperation and the mobilization of resources.

5. Two previous reports of the Secretary-General to the Commission ([E/CN.5/2013/9](#) and [E/CN.5/2012/6](#)) served as inputs to the high-level meeting. The reports focused on actions to implement the commitment of the international community to mainstreaming disability in all aspects of development ([E/CN.5/2013/9](#)), as well as the role of the United Nations system in mainstreaming disability in the ongoing global, regional and national development efforts ([E/CN.5/2012/6](#)).

6. The most recent report to the Commission for Social Development recommended that the implementation of the outcome document should be in synergy with the follow-up strategies at the national, regional and international levels. It also recommended that the United Nations take a coordinated approach, including by developing coherent system-wide targets and indicators that measure performance regarding the inclusion of disability. Further recommendations were made to reflect the disability perspective in planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and human resources management and to include clear and

measurable targets, with corresponding indicators, to monitor their progress in national development plans and strategies.

7. In the coming years, critical opportunities will present themselves for the mainstreaming of disability in the global development agenda, for example in processes relating to the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, to be held in 2014, the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in 2015 and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in 2016.

8. The present report highlights the urgency of including disability in the three pillars (environmental, economic and social) of sustainable development. In the light of the outcome document of the high-level meeting, the report analyses current trends and challenges in mainstreaming disability in development and provides concrete steps in four areas: (a) national policies, plans and strategies to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities; (b) promoting accessibility for all; (c) disability data and statistics, monitoring and evaluation; and (d) international cooperation and the mobilization of resources as a contribution to support the implementation of recommendations from the high-level meeting.

9. In so doing, the present report also draws on the statements delivered by Governments at the high-level meeting and on inputs from the global, regional, and national consultation processes held in preparation for the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

## **II. Building a disability-inclusive development framework towards 2015 and beyond**

### **A. Persons with disabilities as beneficiaries of and actors in sustainable and inclusive development**

10. In accordance with its Charter, the work of the United Nations in the field of disability is an integral part of its mandate to advance economic development and social progress that benefits all members of society for a peaceful and prosperous world. The international community has reaffirmed its commitment to including the disability perspective and persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development through the adoption of a series of international instruments, culminating in the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006 (General Assembly resolution [61/106](#)).<sup>2</sup> However, in spite of the advances in the international normative framework on disability and

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<sup>1</sup> The information presented in section II, part B is based on statements delivered by Member States at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly, held on 23 September 2013, including the statements made available on PaperSmart; reports of the regional consultations held in Bangkok on 15 and 16 May 2013, in Brussels on 25 April 2013, in Salvador, Brazil, on 17 and 18 May 2013, and in Tunis on 29 and 30 May 2013; and direct submissions from entities of the United Nations system and civil society organizations and other individual contributions received by the Secretariat.

<sup>2</sup> Other international instruments include the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (General Assembly resolution 37/52 of 3 December 1982) and the Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96 of 20 December 1993).

development, disability remains largely invisible in the global development agenda and in its corresponding goals, targets and indicators.

11. With more than 1 billion people around the globe living with disabilities according to the *World Report on Disability 2011*, prepared jointly by the World Bank and the World Health Organization, it is evident that no development path that excludes the disability perspective and persons with disabilities can be inclusive, equitable or sustainable. It is encouraging to witness that in recent years, some major United Nations conferences and summits related to development and their outcomes started to reflect the concerns of persons with disabilities and their situation in economic and social development.

12. The interlinkages between disability and sustainable development were further articulated at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in 2012. The outcome document of the Conference, “The future we want” (General Assembly resolution [66/288](#)), includes specific references to disability, highlighting, inter alia, the fact that sustainable development requires the meaningful involvement and active participation of persons with disabilities, and the need for development policies that support inclusive services for all. Paragraph 9 of the outcome document also addresses the responsibilities of States to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

13. The issue of disability has also been part of the recent dialogues towards a post-2015 development agenda. For example, the report of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda ([A/67/890](#), annex) addresses disability in a number of critical ways, including as a cross-cutting issue, and also in relation to human rights, participation and monitoring.

14. Most notably, the report of the High-level Panel made specific recommendations for disability inclusion in the multiple dimensions of a post-2015 development framework, thereby acknowledging disability as a cross-cutting issue in all aspects of development. The report stated that disability should be mainstreamed in all government policies. The High-level Panel stressed the need to bring together the traditional statistics community with information technology innovators in order to enable real-time monitoring of development results. Furthermore, the report stipulated the disaggregation of data for all target groups by disability, age group, gender and income. Inequality should be fought across all development goals, including in the consideration of goals as “achieved” only when they are met for all relevant income and social groups.

15. Greater inclusion of persons with disabilities can accelerate the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including that of the sustainable development goals called for by Member States in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (resolution [66/288](#)), which will build on the experience gained from the Millennium Development Goals. Disability inclusion does not only promote the tenet of universal human rights, but is also based on the principles of economic development as a cross-cutting issue, comparable to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

## B. Interlinkages between disability and sustainable and inclusive development

16. Disability inclusion is central to the achievement of integrated development policies that are effective, coherent and sustainable. Population dynamics, the rise in non-communicable chronic diseases and such environmental factors as natural disasters and situations of conflict all have a major influence on the prevalence of disability. For example, according to global trends in population ageing, the proportion of persons aged 60 and above is projected to increase from 11 per cent of the world's population in 2012, to around 22 per cent (representing 2 billion people) in 2050.<sup>3</sup> The likelihood of having a disability increases significantly with age<sup>4</sup> and therefore the incidence of impairment and disability among the general population is expected to increase. The progressive implementation of policies and programmes to safeguard and protect the rights and well-being of everyone, including the growing population of persons with disabilities, can help create a path to development that is inclusive and sustainable in the future.

17. The following section explores how the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level meeting on disability and development can move forward sustainable development objectives and how the upcoming major United Nations global conferences provide further opportunities to mainstream disability as a cross-cutting issue in the global development agenda. Disability inclusion can be an effective means to reach global development objectives and targets, particularly those related to poverty, gender equality, global health and environmental sustainability. The section highlights the intersection between disability and development in the dimensions of: (a) eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; (b) reducing existing inequality of opportunity among population groups; (c) ensuring universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation; (d) building sustainable cities and transport systems; and (e) creating resilient communities and societies in the face of climate change and the rise of natural disasters and emergencies.

### 1. Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger

18. According to the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*, extreme poverty continues to persist, with 1.2 billion people living on less than \$1.25 a day. Abject poverty is especially rampant in areas where people have poor access to health care, education and productive employment, coupled with unfavourable environmental conditions and political disenfranchisement. While concrete evidence is lacking, limited available data on disability show that households which include a person with a disability have higher rates of poverty than households which do not include a person with a disability, as reported in the *World Report on Disability 2011*. Several factors can contribute to this correlation between disability and poverty. For example, according to the *World Report on Disability 2011*, disability may lead to poverty through lost earnings owing to a lack of employment or

<sup>3</sup> Department of Economics and Social Affairs, Population Division, "Population ageing and development: Ten years after Madrid", *Population Facts*, December 2012, No. 2012/4, available from [www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/popfacts\\_2012-4.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/popfacts_2012-4.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, data reported by the Office on Disability of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, available from [www.hhs.gov/od/about/fact\\_sheets/disabilityaging.html](http://www.hhs.gov/od/about/fact_sheets/disabilityaging.html).

underemployment, and through the additional costs of living with disability, including extra medical, housing and transport costs.

19. Persons with disabilities are more susceptible to suffer from malnutrition and experience food insecurity (see [A/65/173](#)). The outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals at its sixty-fifth session highlighted the need to make special efforts to meet the nutritional needs of persons with disabilities (General Assembly resolution 65/1, para. 70 (v)).

20. In *The State of the World's Children 2013: Children with Disabilities*, the United Nations Children's Fund notes that in some cases children with disabilities face a heightened risk of malnutrition resulting from certain types of physical or intellectual disabilities. The report also notes that many children with disabilities are hidden away from society and kept from attending school, which further excludes them from community screening and feeding initiatives, as well as school food programmes.<sup>5</sup>

21. According to the International Labour Organization, 780 million persons with disabilities are of working age (see CRPD/CSP/2013/2). Addressing the physical, social, economic and cultural barriers that currently hinder their access to education, skills development and decent employment can maximize human resources and contribute to sustainable development efforts at the local, regional and national levels.

22. It is vital that effective social protection floors targeted at improving living standards by guaranteeing a minimum set of income security and health-care services are inclusive of persons with disabilities.

## **2. Reducing existing inequality of opportunity among population groups**

23. Children with disabilities remain one of the most marginalized and excluded groups with respect to education and the challenges they face in realizing their right to education are profound (see [A/66/230](#)). They are significantly less likely to complete primary school education compared with children without disabilities and this is true for both boys and girls with disabilities.<sup>5</sup> Household survey data from four sub-Saharan African countries presented in the *World Report on Disability 2011* showed that between 24 per cent and 39 per cent of children with disabilities over the age of 5 have never attended school.

24. According to the *World Report on Disability 2011*, persons with disabilities experience poor health outcomes and possibly greater vulnerability to preventable secondary conditions and co-morbidities and untreated mental health conditions. In addition they have poorer oral health and higher rates of HIV infection, obesity and premature mortality than persons without disabilities.

25. Women with disabilities are at a disadvantage in terms of access to maternal care, including to reproductive health education, as they are often not considered to be sexually active. Proper policies and measures are required to ensure that adolescents and adults with disabilities have access to sexual reproduction health care and services, family planning and maternal health.

26. An inclusive approach to development that effectively addresses the barriers faced by persons with disabilities can help global efforts to combat inequality and

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.XX.1.

discrimination, including gender inequality; achieve universal primary education; and improve maternal health and other global health objectives.

27. Older persons with disabilities face multiple challenges to the full enjoyment of their human rights, and are often excluded from development, based both on their age and their disability. The cross-section and commonalities of ageing and disability must be fully recognized in order to ensure environmental inclusiveness and move towards the goal of creating a society that meets the needs and capacities of all users.

### **3. Ensuring universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation**

28. Water is recognized as a key component of sustainable development and will be at the heart of all sustainable development goals (see General Assembly resolution 65/1). The implementation of progressive measures to address the multiple barriers to accessing safe drinking water and sanitation for persons with disabilities, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, can positively contribute to global health and international development.

29. While there are limited data available on access to water and sanitation by persons with disabilities, a recent review<sup>6</sup> highlighted a number of barriers, which could leave persons with disabilities at a higher risk of lacking access to these basic services. Barriers arise from obstacles in the built environment, geographical conditions and social and institutional factors, as well as individual functional limitations.

30. Closer attention should be paid to the accessibility issues faced by persons with disabilities in international targets and indicators to monitor access to safe drinking water and sanitation, as access to both elements can, in turn, bring numerous economic and social benefits to persons with disabilities and their families and communities.

### **4. Building sustainable cities and transport systems**

31. Persons with disabilities often face exclusion in society, including in the choice of living environment or access to transportation. According to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), three groups of people appear to be the most systematically excluded in various cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean: persons with disabilities, older persons and slum dwellers.

32. The percentage of the world population residing in urban areas is expected to reach 70 per cent by 2050.<sup>7</sup> With 60 per cent of the areas expected to be urban by 2030 yet to be built,<sup>8</sup> there is a tremendous challenge, which also presents many

<sup>6</sup> N. Groce, N. Bailey, R. Lang, J. F. Trani and M. Kett, "Water and sanitation issues for persons with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries: a literature review and discussion of implications for global health and international development", *Journal of Water and Health*; vol. 9, No. 4 (2011).

<sup>7</sup> See "An overview of urbanization, internal migration, population distribution and development in the world", background paper prepared by the Population Division for the Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development, held at United Nations Headquarters from 21 to 23 January 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, *Cities and Biodiversity Outlook*, Montreal, 2012.

opportunities to ensure that accessibility is addressed from the very beginning in urban planning, including investments in infrastructure, transport systems, access to employment, water and sanitation, and other public services and facilities.

33. The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in 2016, is expected to generate a new urban agenda for the twenty-first century, which would serve as a platform to reinforce the disability perspective, helping to build cities that are responsive to the changing dynamics of the population in a sustainable manner.

## **5. Creating resilient communities and societies in the face of climate change and the rise of natural disasters and emergencies**

34. In the face of humanitarian crises and conflicts, persons with disabilities experience greater exclusion in being evacuated and in access to food, water, sanitation and other shelter and relief services (see [A/65/173](#)).

35. Persons with disabilities are among the worst affected by climate change and there is a significant lack of documented data on the disparate impacts of climate change on their lives. The needs of persons with disabilities have hitherto not been well incorporated into most vulnerability assessments on mitigation, adaptation and other coping strategies.

36. Available data and evidence reveal that the mortality rate among persons with disabilities could be at least twice as high as that of the general population in affected areas, owing to a lack of inclusion and accessibility, including the lack of accessible information and communication in early warning and disaster responses, as illustrated in the great east Japan earthquake and tsunami, in 2011. Despite this, persons with disabilities are still almost invisible or neglected in most international and national disaster risk reduction policies and strategies.

37. Accessibility for persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, as well as in disaster preparedness and emergency response, is also of urgent and critical concern. Disaster risk reduction strategies should take into account the varying requirements of persons with disabilities and ensure their inclusion in all aspects of disaster reduction management.

38. The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai City, Japan, will review the implementation of the current Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters and is expected to adopt a successor framework for disaster risk reduction. A series of regional consultations<sup>9</sup> leading up to the conference will provide opportunities for persons with disabilities to make contributions based on their unique experiences and perspectives to ensure the new framework can help reduce the risk of disasters and build resilient societies and communities.

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<sup>9</sup> Regional consultations on a post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction are to be held from April to June 2014 across all regions; in addition to the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference, to be held on 14 and 15 July 2014, in Geneva; the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee, to be held on 17 and 18 November 2014, also in Geneva, and the fifth International Disaster and Risk Conference, to be held from 24 to 28 August 2014, in Davos, Switzerland.



## **C. Progress and challenges in promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the development agenda towards 2015 and beyond**

### **1. National action plans and programmes to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities**

39. Persons with disabilities continue to experience higher rates of poverty, worse outcomes in education and employment, and adverse social and living conditions. Stressing the need to break down persisting barriers, Member States shared information on progress made in the areas of national legislation, monitoring and evaluation and national development plans and programmes related to education, health care and employment and decent work to mainstream disability at the national level.<sup>10</sup>

40. Several countries have incorporated provisions into their domestic laws to advance the rights of persons with disabilities, including China, Eritrea, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Zambia, while others, such as Malawi, adopted specific disability acts in 2012. For example, the new constitution of Zimbabwe, adopted in 2013, contains provisions for promoting the political participation of persons with disabilities, in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

41. Notable progress has been made by many countries, including Algeria, Burkina Faso, Honduras, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Montenegro, Sierra Leone and Singapore, to include disability in their national development strategies and implement national plans and programmes on disability. Papua New Guinea and Romania are in the process of designing follow-up national disability plans, as the target dates for their current plans are approaching.

42. Other countries, including Burkina Faso, Israel and Turkey, reported on measures to coordinate and monitor interministerial efforts for persons with disabilities. In this regard, Lesotho dedicated a Ministry to disability affairs.

### **2. Promoting accessibility for all**

43. Recognizing accessibility as both a means and goal of inclusive development, several Member States provided information on efforts to enhance the accessibility of the built environment, transportation and information and communications technologies in both urban and rural areas.

44. Trinidad and Tobago reported on efforts under way to enhance the accessibility of infrastructure by adopting international building codes and standards to improve access to public buildings and places of work. In Barbados, a "fully accessible

<sup>10</sup> Information in section II.C is based on the review of 68 statements delivered at or made available in conjunction with the high-level meeting on disability and development: Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Eritrea, Estonia, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Suriname, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Barbados” programme is to be given high priority in the post-2015 development agenda. Ghana has set a national deadline to improve the accessibility of public structures.

45. Other countries reported measures to improve access to schools in order to create enabling environments for the full participation of children with disabilities in education.

46. In spite of ongoing efforts, breaking down accessibility barriers remains an urgent priority. Some small island developing States underscored the challenges posed by geographical characteristics, leading to the dispersion of populations across many lightly populated islands, which creates a need to duplicate programmes and services.

47. The role of assistive devices as well as information and communications technologies was emphasized with regard to enabling persons with disabilities to participate actively in society. For example, emerging technologies have great potential to enhance financial and other related services, including market information, banking and microcredit, insurance and access to public services through e-government websites.

### **3. Disability data and statistics, monitoring and evaluation**

48. The lack of internationally comparable data on disability significantly impedes the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the development agenda. In this respect, stakeholders shared progress and challenges in disability data and statistics and in the monitoring and evaluation of development goals, targets and indicators. In its report on “Statistics and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda”, the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda notes the need for systematic statistics on persons with disabilities, among other population groups, in order to support the principles of non-discrimination and equality. The report included discussions on the measures and indicators to capture inequalities between population groups, including persons with disabilities.

49. Continuing progress has been made in some countries in the area of disability data and statistics, and monitoring and evaluation. Algeria, the Dominican Republic, Nigeria and Romania are taking specific measures to quantitatively and qualitatively map out the needs of persons with disabilities in policies, planning and implementation, through questionnaires in national household surveys or dedicated disability surveys and through the use of national disability registries.

50. The lack of capacity and resources at the national level persistently affect the availability of disability data and statistics at all levels. There is also a need for the standardization of methods for data collection, in order to facilitate global comparability. There is a tendency to under-report persons with disabilities and their needs in censuses and other national surveys and registers, which in several countries is related to social stigma and a lack of disability sensitization of those conducting surveys. Despite such difficulties, Member States, through South-South cooperation, North-South cooperation and technical cooperation have sought to advance the development of available data and statistics on disability.

### **4. International cooperation and the mobilization of resources**

51. Development cooperation, for the most part, has thus far failed to realize the potential of including persons with disabilities in the achievement of sustainable

development. There is concern over the reduction in official development assistance in times of global financial downturns and its adverse impact on persons with disabilities. In this regard, North-South, South-South and technical cooperation should complement each other and be further strengthened, more efficiently used and include a focus on persons with disabilities.

52. Concrete examples of partnerships in this context were given by Australia regarding its work with partners in the Asia-Pacific region to promote disability-inclusive education in order to remove physical barriers and provide services to persons with disabilities. Leaders in the Pacific region have adopted a Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability. The Caribbean Community has decided to convene a regional conference in 2014 to address the priority issues concerning disability and highlight the challenges that are faced by persons with disabilities.

53. General Assembly resolution [67/226](#), entitled “Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system”, gives the United Nations a mandate to take into account the needs of persons with disabilities in its operational activities for development. Within the United Nations system, existing operational frameworks, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, provide entry points for reflecting the disability perspective in United Nations programming at the country level.

54. International development assistance should be disability-inclusive and meet accessibility requirements, especially in the development of policies and programmes related to the built environment, transportation and information and communications technologies. Moreover, coordination among stakeholders at all levels should be strengthened to improve the coherence and effectiveness of disability-inclusive development.

### **III. Conclusions and recommendations**

55. The present report has highlighted the urgent need for integrating the disability perspective into internationally agreed development goals, particularly in the framework of the post-2015 development agenda. More than 1 billion persons living with disabilities constitute a tremendous untapped human resource that can make significant contributions towards achieving global sustainable development. However, in spite of strong commitment to disability inclusion in the global development agenda, progress on the ground has been limited.

56. During the high-level meeting on disability and development, Member States renewed and further strengthened their commitment to disability-inclusive development. The outcome document of the meeting (General Assembly resolution [68/1](#)) sets out a path for the development and implementation of strategic plans in this regard.

57. Governments, the United Nations and international and regional organizations, civil society, in particular organizations for persons with disabilities, the academic community, financial institutions and the private sector, should now take steps to implement the outcome document of the high-level meeting. In doing so, all actors may wish to take into account existing national and regional plans of action and strategies to advance the rights of persons with disabilities in development.

58. In the light of the above, the following recommendations on realizing the internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond may be considered for action:

(a) **Governments should promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in policies and programmes relating to poverty eradication, taking into account the need for adequate social protection floors, improved opportunities for employment and education and appropriate measures for financial inclusion;**

(b) **Accessibility is both a means and goal of inclusive development and should be regarded as an essential investment in this regard. Accessibility should be addressed in all relevant policies, including, for example, in relation to climate change, disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness;**

(c) **Governments are urged to support the development of internationally comparable data and statistics on disability, disaggregated by sex and age, and to report such data through appropriate mechanisms of the United Nations system;**

(d) **Governments, development agencies, international organizations and other stakeholders should include the disability perspective in all areas of development cooperation. Accessibility should be an integral part of programmes and projects relating to the built environment, transportation and information and communications technologies;**

(e) **Governments and other stakeholders are urged to promote international cooperation, including through multi-stakeholder partnerships and networks of experts and practitioners on specific issues in development. In this regard, it may be useful to establish an appropriate United Nations platform on development and disability to further the sharing of information, experience and best practice in mainstreaming disability;**

(f) **The disability perspective should be integrated into United Nations country programming processes such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;**

(g) **United Nations entities, civil society and other relevant stakeholders are encouraged to submit information to the Secretariat on the situation of persons with disabilities in relation to economic and social development, including disability data and statistics, in order to contribute to the periodic reviews on the implementation of General Assembly resolution [68/1](#);**

(h) **Consultative processes towards a post-2015 development framework, as well as upcoming United Nations development conferences and summits, such as the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, to be held in 2014, the third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in 2015 and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in 2016, should include the disability perspective and the participation of persons with disabilities.**