



STATEMENT

For promoting inclusive vocational education and training in the Asian Region:

Opening opportunities for persons with disabilities

Tripartite - Plus Regional Meeting, 29-31 March 2011, Bangkok Thailand

Preamble

- I. More than 400 million¹ persons with disabilities live in the Asia and Pacific region. Opening equal opportunities to training and employment for youth, women and men with disabilities is an urgent priority for all countries as they seek to develop. This is also necessary if the Asia-Pacific region is to attain the goal of realizing inclusive societies as envisaged by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Biwako Millennium Framework.
- II. We, participants at the Regional Tripartite-Plus Meeting on “Promoting inclusive vocational education and training in the Asian region: Opening opportunities for persons with disabilities”, representing governments, employers’ organizations, trade unions, and organisations of and for persons with disabilities of Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam, have gathered in Bangkok, Thailand, on 29, 30 and 31 March 2011, to review the status of laws and policies, programmes and services relating to inclusion of persons with disabilities in general vocational education and training; to share knowledge and good practices by social partners of inclusive vocational training in the region and globally; to identify steps required to improve access by people with disabilities to general skills development programmes; and to encourage countries to take tripartite action at national and local level on promoting policies on inclusive vocational education and training.
- III. Considering that changing economies and competitive labour markets present greater challenges for persons with disabilities;
- IV. Acknowledging that skills development is central in enabling all people to take part in the labour force;
- V. Realizing the cultural and socio-economic diversity of the region as well as the rural and urban dimensions which require multiple and differentiated approaches;

¹ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 10 percent of the world's population has a disability.

- VI. Recognizing Art. 24 (5) of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)² which calls governments to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, and the international labour standards, including the ILO Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)³, which promotes the right of persons with disabilities to access the same vocational services available to all citizens, including training and employability programmes;
- VII. Taking into account and recognizing the need for a twin-track approach, whereby dedicated specialised vocational education and training centres may exist as additional or alternative resources to support inclusive vocational education and training programmes for choice of persons with disabilities as a part of or as diversified programme component.

Declare that we undertake to promote action towards enabling people with disabilities to access vocational education and training on equal basis with others with the full involvement of all relevant actors including civil society.

Call upon international organizations including the International Labour Organization to promote full inclusion of persons with disabilities in society including equal access to training and employment opportunities, in line with the provisions of international labour standards and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Part I: Recommendations

Participants of the meeting recommended that:

- i Governments, employers' organizations and trade unions in cooperation with organisations of and for persons with disabilities take action towards promoting ratification and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and ILO Convention on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) 1983 (No. 159).
- ii Governments, employers' organizations and trade unions in cooperation with organisations of and for persons with disabilities take collective responsibility for providing diversified training opportunities for persons with disabilities, including transitional orientation and planning. Furthermore, they take action towards introducing models that use targeted programmes for people with high support requirements, and that can serve as resource centres to advise mainstream programme planners on how to include disabled persons into their training programmes.
- iii Governments take action to: improve the national legislation related to inclusive vocational education and training; develop guidelines on the legal framework for inclusive vocational education and training; and promote coordination among social partners.
- iv Employers' organizations encourage their members to collaborate with training agencies in identifying skills requirements of the local labour market and in providing apprenticeships and on-the-job training opportunities, where available, for persons with disabilities. Funding

² Ratified in the region by 20 countries: Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, Cook Islands, India, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Vanuatu.

³ Ratified in the region by 15 countries: Afghanistan, Australia, Azerbaijan, China, Fiji, Japan, Korea, Kurdistan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Thailand and Turkey.

opportunities for apprenticeship and on-the-job training should be made available from different sources.

v Trade unions draw attention to the importance of including persons with disabilities in national and trade union policies, programmes, and services concerning skills development for decent work in light with the promotion of inclusive and safe workplaces.

vi Organisations of and for persons with disabilities continue to: play a support role to persons with disabilities and their support networks in the move from a separate to an inclusive approach to vocational education and training; provide disability awareness sensitizing all actors to the concerns, needs and rights of disabled persons' take part in decision making processes jointly with tripartite partners.

vii International organizations continue to collaborate and coordinate on initiatives related to education, training and disability ensuring linkages between interventions at local, national and international level.

Viii The International Labour Organization continues to promote international labour standards which apply to all persons with disabilities.

Part II – Supporting inclusive vocational education and training – the way forward

The promotion of action and reviewing progress in accelerating access to inclusive vocational education and training for persons with disabilities is to be undertaken by all present partners in their capacities. It should be captured in regular tri-partite meetings - and national initiatives to review progress, and capitalizing on information exchange.

Adopted by acclamation at the Tripartite-Plus Regional Meeting on Promoting Inclusive Vocational Education and Training: Opening Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, 31 March 2011.

List of partner organizations represented in the meeting

Bangladesh:

Ministry of Labour, Department of Labour
Ministry of Education
Bangladesh Sanjukta Sramic Federation (BSSF)
Bangladesh Employers Federation
National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD)

Cambodia:

Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training,
Department of Technical Vocational
Education and Training Management
Ministry of Education, Vocational
Orientation Department
Free Trade Union of Workers of the
Kingdom of Cambodia (FTUWKC)
Cambodian Federation of Employers &
Business Associations (CAMFEBA)

China:

Ministry of Human Resources and Social
Security
Chinese Adult Education Association
(CAEA)
China Enterprise Confederation (CEC)
China Disabled Persons' Federation

Indonesia:

Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration
Confederation of Indonesian Prosperity
Trade Union (SBSI)
Employers' Association of Indonesia
(APINDO)
Indonesian Disabled People's Association
(PPCI)

Mongolia:

Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions
(CMTU)
Mongolian Employers' Federation
Mongolian National Federation of Disabled
People Organizations

Lao PDR:

Ministry of Labour
Ministry of Education, Department of
Technical and Vocational Education
Lao Federation of Trade Unions
Lao National Chamber of Commerce and
Industry
Lao's National Disabled People Association

Thailand:

Ministry of Labour, Department of Skills
Development
Ministry of Education, Bureau of Special
Education, Office of Basic Education
Commission
Nakornprathom School for the Deaf
National Congress Private Industrial of
Employee (NCPE)
State Enterprises Workers' Relations
Confederation (SERC)
Thai Trade Union Congress (TTUC) Employers'
Confederation of Thailand (ECOT)
The Redemptorist Foundation for Persons with
Disabilities

Viet Nam:

Ministry of Labour- Invalids and Social
Affairs
Vietnam National Institute of Educational
Science
Vietnam General Confederation of Labour
(VGCL)
Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce &
Industry (VCCI)
Disabled People Hanoi