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Draft Operational Guide on Disability-inclusive Meetings

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Introduction

Why disability inclusion anyway?

One in every six persons in Asia and the Pacific has some form of disability: 650 million women, men and children. The number is expected to rise over the next decades due to combination of factors such as population ageing and increased numbers of people affected by chronic health conditions, road traffic injuries and natural disasters. This makes it imperative to build a truly inclusive society, in which diversity of abilities is embraced, and persons with disabilities are empowered to contribute fully across the entire spectrum of development processes.

Global and regional instruments developed over recent years testify the growing recognition of disability inclusion in development. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD),¹ a disability specific human rights treaty adopted in 2006, calls for the full and equal participation of persons with diverse disabilities in all aspects of society, including in decision-making processes. At the end of February 2015, 152 States worldwide were Parties to the CRPD; this number is expected to rise in the coming years.² The forthcoming Sustainable Development Goals, to be adopted in late 2015, include an explicit disability dimension, a welcomed progression from their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals, which did not refer directly to disability.



¹ A/RES/61/106, United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2515, No. 44910 (2006).

² See <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>.

In Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has been promoting disability-inclusive development and the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities over the last two decades. ESCAP is currently promoting the implementation of the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, within the framework of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022.³ The Incheon Strategy provides the Asian and Pacific region – and the world – with the first set of ten interrelated, regionally-agreed disability-inclusive development goals, and aims at accelerated ratification and implementation of the CRPD.

Persons with disabilities were instrumental in the drafting of these key documents. Persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, psychosocial and multiple disabilities collectively and actively drew on their wealth of experience and insight to contribute to meaningful policymaking. Furthermore, persons with disabilities have been increasingly active in global and regional meetings on a range of themes which are related to, but are not restricted to disability specific matters – from gender equality to copyright issues. In addition, the slogan “Nothing about us without us” has become a popular byword for the importance of persons with disabilities as active decision-makers over all aspects of their lives. Many important insights have been gained from the inclusive participation of persons with disabilities at all levels of policymaking. The importance of accessibility and inclusiveness has been recognized as crucial – whether in relation to the physical environment, public transportation, services, and information and communication.

Why this Guide?

A Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, was established and endorsed by the Commission at its 69th session in

³ See E/ESCAP/69/L.7

2013⁴ to provide technical guidance to ESCAP member States on the implementation of the Incheon Strategy. The Working Group is an inclusive mechanism, composed of 15 government members and 15 representatives of civil society organizations, most of which are Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs).

The inaugural session of the Working Group, held in 2014 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, recommended the ESCAP Secretariat to produce an operational Guide, in order to provide member States and other stakeholders with practical and technical knowledge for the preparation and conduct of meetings which are accessible for persons with diverse disabilities. The recommendation arose from the Working Group members' commitment to the mainstreaming of truly disability-inclusive meetings. Accordingly, this Guide aims to facilitate disability inclusiveness, not only at the Working Group sessions themselves, but in all meetings. This supports the Incheon Strategy, which includes a specific goal (goal 3) on enhancing access to the physical environment, public transportation, knowledge, information and communication. Meetings may or may not focus directly on disability; given the prevalence of disability worldwide and especially in Asia and the Pacific, it is clear that the perspective of persons with disabilities is vital across all aspects of decision-making.

What does this Operational Guide provide readers with?

The Operational Guide is intended to assist member States and other stakeholders in organizing disability-inclusive meetings via consideration of the provision of enabling physical environments, public transportation, services and information and communication to persons with disabilities.

This Operational Guide consists of the following three major chapters: 1) Key concepts on disability-inclusive meetings; 2) Planning and preparation of disability-

⁴ Ibid., appendix II.

inclusive meetings; 3) Conducting and evaluating disability-inclusive meetings. Each chapter contains principles and practical knowledge which may be useful for meeting organizers keep in mind. The chapters are followed by a glossary of terms, which provides definitions of terms used in the Operational Guide. The Operational Guide has been prepared in consultation with persons with disabilities.

1. Key concepts on disability-inclusive meetings

This chapter begins with a consideration of the concept of disability and the diversity of impairment and disability, and then provides definitions and explanations of key concepts related to disability-inclusive meetings: universal design, accessibility and reasonable accommodation.

What is disability?

Traditionally, disability was defined from a biomedical perspective. This emphasized the causes and diagnosis of impairments of a person and prescribed medical intervention and treatment. However, more recent notions of disability integrate a social dimension, reflecting greater awareness of the discrimination persons with disabilities have been historically subject to on the basis of disability.

The CRPD states that disability is an evolving concept, and emphasizes that disability occurs with the interaction of persons who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments and physical, informational, institutional, and attitudinal barriers. This concept underscores that impairments only become disabilities in conjunction with external barriers. Such barriers can inhibit persons with disabilities' "full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others". The thrust of the CRPD is on the need for societal interventions to minimize those barriers, ultimately to create a barrier-free society.⁵

⁵ See article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106).



Diversity of impairment and disability

When one thinks of persons with disabilities, images of blue signage with white wheelchair symbols might spring to mind. However, persons with disabilities constitute an extraordinarily wide spectrum of people. Persons with physical impairments include those who have lost or experienced a reduction of the function of their limbs and other body parts, some of whom consequently use wheelchairs, crutches, and other mobility aids. Persons with sensory impairments include those with visual and hearing impairments. Among those with visual impairments, some are blind and some are partially-sighted. Of those persons with hearing impairments, some have been deaf since birth or childhood, some became deafened later in life, and some may hear partially but be hard of hearing. Persons with intellectual disabilities include those who have difficulties in cognition and intellectual functioning. Persons with psychosocial disabilities include those who have difficulties in mental, emotional functioning in society, and have been conventionally diagnosed with names of “mental illness” such as depression and schizophrenia. Persons with developmental disabilities are those experiencing difficulties in their learning development, and include those with autism. But within the group of persons with autism, behavioural patterns and needs are diverse. Persons with multiple disabilities have more than one impairment, such as persons

who are both deaf and blind. This listing is not exhaustive of every possible impairment which exists or could arise in future. Another dimension of the diversity of disability is that some impairments might be more conspicuous than others. Moreover, some persons with disabilities might need little or no support, while others might require a large amount. Accordingly, it is always important to keep in mind that persons with disabilities are an extremely diverse group.

Universal design

The CRPD defines universal design as the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be accessible by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or modification.⁶ This concept asserts that environment, public transportation and information should be designed in such a way as to accommodate not only the needs of persons with diverse disabilities, but also the broadest possible spectrum of humanity. The concept of universal design emphasizes the common needs shared by persons with and without disabilities. For example, ramps built at entrances of public buildings facilitate the accessibility of not only wheelchair users but also those with heavy luggage, families with strollers for babies, toddlers, pregnant women, older persons who have some difficulties with mobility and those with temporary injuries. Television subtitles, meanwhile, help not only those with hearing impairments but also those watching in noisy environments, as well as those who are not fully proficient in a particular language. The seven principles of universal design, which were developed around the inception of the universal design concept, can guide planners and designers to translate the concept into reality.⁷ Buildings, public transportation, information and communication systems, documents, products and services should be all be designed according to these principles. The costs of factoring in these considerations at the design and

⁶ See article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106).

⁷ Seven principles are as follows: equitable use; flexibility in use; simple and intuitive use; perceptible information; tolerance for error; low physical effort and size and space for approach and use. The principles were developed in 1997. Available from <http://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/The-7-Principles/>.

construction stages can be minimized, and are invariably lower than those incurred at a later stage when features need to be added and modifications are made after construction.

Accessibility

Accessibility addresses the mainstream inclusion of persons with diverse disabilities on an equal basis with others. Indeed, the CRPD defines itself as a set of measures “to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life on an equal basis with others”.⁸ Four major aspects of accessibility referred to in the CRPD are: the physical environment, transportation, information and communications - including information and communications technologies and systems - and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.⁹ Examples of specific accessibility measures mentioned in the CRPD include the provision of “sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions” as well as Internet accessibility.¹⁰ Further accessibility measures include the installation of ramps and elevators, the provision of wheelchairs, as well as service personnel to assist persons with developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, or psychosocial disabilities in identifying solutions to a range of issues, for example establishing travel routes and arrangements.

Accessibility should be achieved without the exclusion of persons with disabilities; on the contrary it should reinforce the inclusion of persons with disabilities across many aspects of life; and should not reinforce exclusion. For example, as indicated in Figure 1 below, the process of installing a ramp to enter a building may make it

⁸ See article 9 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106).

⁹ Ibid., article 21.

technically accessible to persons with disabilities, but it does not guarantee that it is inclusive. If, as in the illustration, a ramp is far removed from stairs, and does not facilitate easy and equitable use by all users, it can hardly be considered inclusive. The ideal solution for the building in this example would be to have one easy ramp in front of the building instead of the staircase. The solution would facilitate the easy mobility of all people including wheelchair users.

Figure 1



Source: A slide obtained by a presentation made by Mr. James. D. Harrison, lecturer, Cork Institute of Technology, and Undergraduate Course Leader, Cork Centre for Architectural Education, Republic of Ireland at the ESCAP-South-South Programme on Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities, held from 10 to 19 December 2014 in Guangzhou-Macao-Hong Kong, China.

Reasonable accommodation

Whilst accessibility refers to a set of generalized actions which facilitate the participation of persons with diverse disabilities, reasonable accommodation

emphasizes the fact that such accessibility measures should be mutually agreed upon by right holders and duty bearers. The CRPD defines reasonable accommodation as “necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms”.¹¹

The concept of reasonable accommodation is based on a human rights emphasis on duty bearers’ obligation to provide right holders with accessibility measures to an extent that does not overburden duty bearers. It is a concept always involving these two parties, and necessitating mutual agreement between them with regard to provision of measures requested by an individual right holder. In States where provision of reasonable accommodation is mandated by law, the question of whether or not a provision causes the duty bearer excessive burden can be disputed in court.

Examples of reasonable accommodation include the allocation of fewer or more flexible working hours to an employee with psychosocial disabilities, or the adjustment of the physical dimensions and layout of furniture and equipment in a workplace for persons with physical impairments. Additionally, documents might be provided in accessible formats to students with visual impairments.

Inter-linkage of universal design, accessibility and reasonable accommodation

When information, physical environment, services and products are designed according to universal design principles, additional measures to ensure accessibility are minimized and debates about what constitutes reasonable accommodation are avoided. For example, in the past, persons with visual impairments may have needed to install special software or applications to acquire audio output from visual information, or to be able to use audio-to text translation on computers or mobile

¹¹ See article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106).

devices. However, computers and smartphones are increasingly produced with these functions pre-installed. This indicates the growing use of universal design across information and communication technologies.

Let us take an example to better consider the inter-linkage of universal design, accessibility and reasonable accommodation. Traditionally, a podium in a meeting room is high enough only for people of a certain height to stand up and speak. However, if for example, one is to organize an international conference, and the guest speaker is none other than Dr. Stephen Hawking, a world-renowned physicist who also uses a wheelchair, a number of questions arise. The event organizers might consider whether the stage and the podium are accessible to Dr. Hawking. How high is the stage? Is it accessible to a wheelchair user by ramp lift? If not, is it reasonable to ask Dr. Hawking to deliver his keynote address from the floor? Or would it be more appropriate to allow him access to the stage so that the physicist may be seen by his audience? This naturally begs the question: how much will the building of a ramp or lift cost? In turn, the meeting organizers might then consider the costs they might have saved if the conference room had been constructed according to the principles of universal design.

To take one more pertinent example, if a university already has a pool of sign language interpreters for students with disabilities, a new student with a hearing impairment can simply make use of these services. A discussion about what constitutes reasonable accommodation on the part of the university is therefore unnecessary.

As these examples demonstrate, universal design can save time, effort and money if its principles are followed.

For a meeting to be genuinely disability-inclusive, it should be planned in accordance with the key concepts explained above: universal design, accessibility and reasonable accommodation. The following chapters explain the key features of

disability-inclusive meetings in detail, and give practical information for meeting organizers.

2. Planning and preparation of disability-inclusive meetings

This chapter provides principles and practical ideas for meeting organizers at the onset of planning, when identifying particular needs of persons with disabilities, and when making preparations closer to the time of a meeting. Preparations include:

- Planning with a disability perspective from the outset
- Sending Invitations
- Formulating a programme
- Selecting an accessible venue and accommodation
- Producing accessible documentation and information and communication services
- Setting up the venue
- Arranging accessible transportation
- Budgeting



2.1 Planning with a disability perspective from the outset

At the earliest phase of planning, it is worthwhile to consider how the theme of a meeting can incorporate a disability perspective. It should not be assumed that purely because a meeting's theme may not be 'disability' per se, it will therefore not relate to disability. On the contrary, in line with the growing discourse which seeks to mainstream disability inclusiveness into all aspects of policymaking, a disability perspective can and should be considered when planning any meeting. Moreover, as greater awareness is raised about the significance of disability, meeting organizers can expect greater participation from persons with disabilities. Naturally then, meetings on any number of themes, from disaster risk reduction to transport; from education to gender violence – can and should include a disability angle. The ways in which such areas intersect with disabilities can lend meetings a greater degree of depth and nuance. As society becomes more inclusive and less discriminatory, we can expect to see persons with disabilities in a greater range of roles – offering specialist perspectives not only from a disability perspective but also as specialists in any number of fields.

2.2 Sending Invitations

Sending out invitations to potential participants is a key step in formalizing the organization of a meeting. In order to have a successful meeting, it is advisable to send invitations well in advance – if possible six months before the start date of the meeting itself. This will give organizers sufficient time to make necessary arrangements for participants.

In order to tailor preparations to the specific needs of participants with disabilities, meeting organizers should not forget to attach an accessibility request form in the invitation package. The needs of every person with disability are likely to differ significantly, and an accessibility form is therefore very useful in identifying the

specific needs by asking them directly. See Annex 4 for an example of a sample accessibility request form.

2.3 Formulating a programme

Here are some points to consider when formulating the programme of a meeting:

✓ Check:

- Whether a programme provides sufficient time for each agenda item, including interpretation services (for sign language, or Finger Braille), which might require extra time. Some participants with disabilities may require additional time allowances to make interventions;
- Whether a programme contains enough time for coffee breaks for all the participants and interpreters. The recommended duration for coffee breaks is between 20 and 30 minutes.
- If food, coffee and snacks are to be served, keep in mind that persons with mobility impairments can find buffet-type service challenging. Solutions to this include lower-height tables, a sit-down service, or ensuring that volunteers or staff can assist people at the buffet.
- Meeting organizers should also factor in the time necessary for all participants to move between the meeting room and the break area.

2.4 Selecting an accessible venue and accommodation

It is preferable for meeting organizers to select the meeting venue and accommodation for participants before sending invitations. It is also recommended that the selected meeting venue and accommodation integrates universal design principles and is therefore easy to use for participants to the maximum extent possible. Even if no participants of a particular meeting are persons with disabilities per se, a wide range of people can benefit from an accessible venue: older persons, pregnant women, children or people with injuries. However, as long as universal

design remains far from mainstream, organizers need to ensure that accessibility is provided to all with no discrimination. Therefore, because services are scarce in some locations, organizers should aim to begin preparations well in advance.

Before making a decision on the meeting venue and accommodation, it is recommended that organizers establish some alternative options, and compare and contrast them from the perspective of universal design and accessibility. In the selection process, it is advisable to conduct access audits of both potential venues and accommodation. In so doing, meeting organizers can ensure that the particular needs of all participants are met. Meeting organizers may seek the involvement of local Disabled People's Organizations.¹²

Once meeting organizers confirm the list of participants for a meeting, the particular needs of each participant and/or resource person with disabilities should be clear. It is important for organizers to cater to these specific needs.

Below are some considerations which meeting organizers should bear in mind when selecting a venue and accommodation. These points are by no means exhaustive or technically specific; they are rather intended to sensitize organizers' awareness to many aspects of accessibility. Specialized terms used are defined and explained in the glossary at the end of this Guide.



¹² ESCAP secretariat plans on publishing a resource booklet on accessibility auditing in early 2016.

Space

✓ Check:

- “Whether the meeting venue and accommodation rooms, sanitary facilities, restaurant, and other functional rooms have sufficient space for all participants, including persons who use wheelchairs and other assistive devices to manoeuvre. See A
- Whether there is allocated space in the meeting room for multimedia screens or projectors to display simultaneous captioning and seating for attendant care providers such as sign language interpreters.
- Whether there is enough space in the meeting room for an audio induction loop.
- An example of adequate space for wheelchair mobility is indicated in the diagram in Annex 1.

Lighting

✓ Check:

- That lighting in the meeting venue and accommodation is neither too bright nor too dark. It should be evenly distributed. This is especially important in the meeting room itself.
- Whether there are any disturbing reflections of light or shadow, caused by glossy, shiny, glazed materials in the buildings which could adversely affect persons with visual impairments.¹³

¹³ National Disability Authority (NDA) in Ireland, *Accessibility Tool Kit: for the public sector staff*, Available from <http://accessibility.ie/MakeYourBuildingsMoreAccessible/>.

Sound

✓ Check:

- That the venue has an adequate microphone and sound system which meets the auditory requirements of all participants.
- Whether an assistive listening system is available, including additional amplification for those with hearing impairments. Such systems can improve ratios of sound to noise.

Temperature

✓ Check:

- That the temperature of a meeting venue and other function rooms is neither too cold nor too hot. Some people may be particularly sensitive to extreme temperatures.

Height

✓ Check:

- That registration tables, rostrums, tables and chairs in the meeting venue and accommodation are accessible for wheelchair users and persons of short stature to use (e.g. 80 to 100 cm), or are adjustable.

Visual contrast

✓ Check:

- Whether colour and its intensity in a meeting venue and other facilities create sufficient visual contrast. Adequate contrast levels help persons with visual impairments to: 1) distinguish between walls and floors; 2) distinguish between door backgrounds and fittings; 3) avoid hazards and 4) find their way around buildings.

Communication

✓ Check:

- Whether the communication system within the meeting venue and accommodation are easy to understand and easily accessible.

Features to check include:

- Reception, concierge;
- Conference registration desk;
- Telephones;
- Location of intercoms;
- Jargon used in written material.

Signs

✓ Check:

- “Whether signs in the meeting venue and accommodation are positioned clearly and visibly.
- Whether signs in the meeting venue, elevators and other facilities have raised lettering and Braille translations wherever possible;
- Whether signs in a meeting venue and other facilities have large enough font characters for all participants to read;
- Whether signs are located in areas which are accessible to all;
- Whether signs are easily recognizable by all participants;
- Whether signs are easy to understand for participants with intellectual disabilities.

Ramps and steps

✓ Check:

- Whether there are ramps to enter and exit the meeting venue and accommodation, and to move freely within the building – such as via

ramps to allow wheelchair users to access the stage in a meeting room;”¹⁴

- Whether the gradient of ramps are 1:14 and not too steep;
- Whether ramps have enough turning space;
- Ramps should not exceed the maximum 9 metre distance that most wheelchair users find manoeuvrable.¹⁵
- If ramps are not available to access buildings and move inside them, negotiate with the management of a facility to set install them.
- If ramps are not available to access the stage in a meeting room, consider whether the use of the stage is absolutely necessary. If a stage is necessary, negotiate with the management of a facility to install ramps.

Corridors and doors

✓ Check:

- Whether corridors and routes are obstructed by equipment, machinery, or other physical objects. Recommended space for corridors is indicated in a diagram in Annex 1.
- Whether doors are wide enough for all participants (wider than 100 cm).¹⁶
- Whether doors are easy for all participants to open and close;
- Whether facilities have too many doors or not. If that is the case, it might be difficult for the easy mobility of wheelchairs users and others;

¹⁴ National Disability Authority (NDA) in Ireland, *Accessibility Tool Kit: for the public sector staff*, Available from <http://accessibility.ie/MakeYourBuildingsMoreAccessible/>.

¹⁵ SDD/APDPD(3)/WG(2)/INF/9

¹⁶ An average adult wheelchair, according to ANSI (American National Standards Institute), can be up to 50 inches long and 32 inches wide. Available at <http://www.1800wheelchair.ca/news/post/Making-your-Home-Wheelchair-Friendly.aspx>.

- Whether doors have handles which are between 80 to 100 cm above floor level.

Sanitary facilities

✓ Check:

- Whether a bathroom is located close to the meeting space;
- Whether bathroom facilities have been built according to universal design;
- “Whether doors to bathroom facilities are easily accessible for persons with diverse disabilities
- Whether bathrooms have sufficiently wide doors, and low-positioned wash basins;
- Whether bathroom facilities have an alarm system which is accessible to persons with both visual and hearing impairments;
- Whether bathrooms have mobile grab bars to allow persons with diverse disabilities to comfortably use toilet facilities;
- Whether bathrooms are used for storing cleaning equipment and/or are used in any other incorrect or obstructive way.”¹⁷

Safety and disaster risk reduction measures

✓ Check:

- Whether a warning system and evacuation plan are established at the meeting venue and accommodation;

¹⁷ National Disability Authority (NDA) in Ireland, *Accessibility Tool Kit: for the public sector staff*. Available from <http://accessibility.ie/MakeYourBuildingsMoreAccessible/>.

- Whether the evacuation routes are accessible for persons with diverse disabilities. For example:
 - Warnings for persons with hearing impairments - i.e. flashing light, fax;
 - Accessible evacuation routes - i.e. not via stairs;
 - Easy to understand signs for persons with intellectual disabilities and those who do are not proficient in the language of the country in which a meeting is held;
 - Personnel who can assist persons with disabilities in case of emergency.

Parking spaces

✓ Check:

- “Whether there are designated parking spaces and drop-off points for persons with disabilities;
- Whether the surface and lighting around the meeting venue and accommodation and on the paths that customers use are adequate for all participants.

Hotel rooms

✓ Check:

- The height of beds should be adjustable for wheelchair users, persons of short stature and persons with mobility impairments.”¹⁸

Service animals

¹⁸ National Disability Authority (NDA) in Ireland, *Accessibility Tool Kit: for the public sector staff*. Available from <http://accessibility.ie/MakeYourBuildingsMoreAccessible/>.

✓ Check:

- Whether meeting venues and accommodation allows service animals such as guide dogs.

Attendant care and services

✓ Check:

- Whether a venue or hotel has staff available to help participants with disabilities.
- Whether a venue or hotel has wheelchairs and other assistive devices available.
- That, where necessary, additional accommodation is provided for attendant care and service providers.



Seamless connectivity

✓ Check:

- Routes connecting a meeting venue to bathrooms, elevators, restaurants, business centres and other facilities that participants are likely to use are direct and free of obstructions.
- Routes are identified with easy-to-understand signage and maps indicating the location of certain facilities.

The most crucial indicator for accessibility is whether persons with disabilities who are participants in a planned meeting can comfortably use facilities on an equal basis with others. Naturally, as this Guide has so far tried to illustrate, needs differ greatly, in correlation with the great diversity of impairments and their interaction with a broad range of barriers. This makes it all the more important to involve persons with disabilities in the organization of meetings from the early planning stages.

2.5 Producing accessible documentation and information and communication services

2.5.1 Preparing accessible documents and information

Meeting organizers should prepare documents and informational materials to be accessible for all participants to the maximum extent possible.

Below are some exemplary check points to consider when seeking to create accessible materials:

Announcement of meetings and their details online

- ✓ Check:
 - Whether websites used to announce meetings conform to WCAG 2.0 standards. This is an internationally accepted standard for web accessibility developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

Meeting documents (printed and online)

- ✓ Check:
 - Whether printed or online documents are readable and accessible;
 - Readability check points to bear in mind:

- That the documents use colours sparingly; most readable material should be in black and white. This will make it easier for individuals with print disabilities to read text. Try to restrict use of coloured text to large titles, headlines and highlighted materials.¹⁹
- Use high-contrast colour combinations if using colours;²⁰
- The font size of a standard document should preferably be between 12 and 18;
- Leading should be at least 25 to 30 per cent of the font size. Leading refers to the space between lines of text;
- Fonts should not be too decorative. Arial and Verdana are recommended, as they are Sans Serif fonts. This means that the letters do not have serifs – the tail-like tips on the edge of letters as found in fonts such as Times New Roman.
- Italics or upper case letters are not recommended. When emphasis is needed, use bold or larger font.
- Use wide margins or spiral bindings to enable readers to use magnifiers;
- Use a matte or non-glossy finish to cut down on glare.
- Use plain language where possible to ensure easy comprehension by all.
- Accessibility check points for preparation of documentation:
 - Whether persons with visual impairments require e-copies of documents. An increasing number of persons with

¹⁹ Canadian National Institute for the Blind, *Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines*. Available from <http://www.cnib.ca/en/services/resources/Clearprint/Documents/CNIB%20Clear%20Print%20Guide.pdf>

²⁰ Ibid.

visual impairments use computers with applications such as JAWS, NVDA or DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System), which allow them to access documents through audio outputs. Once documents are provided in word or text format, persons with visual impairments should be able to access information through these methods. Organizers might therefore prepare USBs or CDs which contain the meeting documents in these accessible formats.

- Do not rely solely on PDF format as many persons with visual impairments might not be able to use this format with their assistive software.
- DAISY documents may include:
 - One or more digital audio file containing a human narration of part or all of the source text;
 - A marked-up file containing some or all of the text (strictly speaking, this marked-up text file is optional);
 - A synchronization file to relate markings in the text file with time points in the audio file;
 - A navigation control file which enables users to move smoothly between files, whilst synchronization between text and audio is maintained.
- Check whether documents can be translated into easy-to-understand versions for persons with intellectual disabilities. See “We Want to be Counted”: Incheon Strategy to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific (easy-to-understand version), for reference.²¹

²¹ Available from <http://www.unescap.org/resources/incheon-strategy-make-right-real-persons-disabilities-asia-and-pacific-easy-understand>.

- Ensure that copies of presentation materials are made available ahead of a meeting.
- Consider the possibility of creating colour coded cards for persons with intellectual disabilities in case they want to ask for clarification on a subject, for slowing down the speed of speech, or for expressing that they agree with what is being talked about in the meeting.

Visual materials

✓ Check:

- When PowerPoint slides are used, text should be written in plain language, in a Sans Serif font. Each slide should contain no more than six lines of text per slide. Non-text elements such as images, tables and charts should all be kept as simple as possible and should be accompanied by alternative text (alt-text).
- That videos and film clips used during a planned meeting are captioned for persons with hearing impairments;
- Whether videos and film clips used during a planned meeting contain audio description for persons with visual impairments;
- Whether videos and film clips used during a planned meeting contain sign language interpreters, signing the content of the materials.



Arranging Braille documents

Some persons with visual impairments use Braille, a tactile writing system written with embossed dots on paper. Typically, a combination of six embossed dots

expresses one letter. Braille can be written with a slate and stylus, or typed using a device, such as a portable Braille note-taker, or on a computer that prints with a Braille embosser.

One commonly held misconception about Braille is that it is universal. In fact, as with the various sign languages, every spoken language has its own form of Braille.

Upon request, meeting organizers may be required to translate meeting documents into Braille. As a general rule, Braille uses three sheets of paper for every one page in standard print.

Here are some points to check when arranging Braille documents:

- ✓ Check:
 - Where Braille translation services are available.
 - How much Braille translation will cost per page.

2.5.2 Arranging sign language interpreters

Some persons who are deaf or who have hearing impairments use sign language as their major means of communication on a daily basis. This is a language which uses body language and physical movement to communicate as opposed to acoustically conveyed sound patterns²². Expressions of sign language involve a combination of finger shapes, movements, and orientation of hands, arms or body, as well as facial expressions to fluidly express a speaker's thoughts. A common misconception is that all sign languages are the same worldwide. Each language generally has its own, native sign language, and some have more than one, though sign languages may share similarities to each other, whether in the same country or not. For example, American Sign Language is different from British sign language in many ways.

²² Education Portal, *Sign Language Interpreter: Job Description, Duties and Requirements*. Available from http://education-portal.com/articles/Sign_Language_Interpreter_Job_Description_Duties_and_Requirements.html



Sign language has its own deep structure and syntax. For example, one can translate American English to signed American English by simply fitting signs of American sign language into a structure of spoken American English. American Sign Language, on the other hand, has its own word order, different from spoken American English.

Sign language Interpretation facilitates communication between spoken languages and sign languages.

Meeting organizers are required to identify the needs for sign language interpretation. When the need arises, organizers are required to make arrangements for the provision of sign language interpreters.

Here are some points to check when making such arrangements:

✓ Check:

- What sign language interpretation is required;
- Sign language interpreters:
 - Usually, it is best to consult with organizations for persons with hearing impairments for information about the provision of sign language interpreters;

- Hiring interpreters:
 - Interpreters generally need a break every 15 to 20 minutes, so if a meeting is longer than 20 minutes, the meeting will need at least two sign language interpreters.
 - Fees for the services of sign language differ from one country to another, but, in principle, sign language interpreters should be paid on an equal basis with spoken language interpreters.²³

2.5.3 Arranging Finger Braille interpreters

Deaf-blind individuals experiences difficulties both in seeing and hearing, thus requiring assistance from interpreters. They are conventionally identified as “Finger Braille” or “Tactile Braille” interpreters working on a one-to-one basis with a deaf-blind person to facilitate interpretation between spoken language and tactile language, typically through the use fingers tapping on hands. It is often the case that a deaf-blind individual establishes a rapport with Finger Braille or Tactile Braille interpreters, and establishes a highly individualized system of communication. Therefore, it is recommended that meeting organizers support the provision of those interpreters which individual deaf-blind participants might request.

Here are some points to check when making such arrangements:

✓ Check:

- Whether a deaf-blind participant has already indicated that he or she would like to bring his or her own interpreters;
- Hiring interpreters;
 - Interpreters generally need a break every fifteen to twenty minutes, so if a meeting is longer than twenty minutes, the meeting will need at least two Finger Braille interpreters;

- Fees for the services of Finger Braille interpreters differ from one country to another, but, in principle, they should be paid on an equal basis with spoken language interpreters and sign language interpreters.

2.5.4 Arranging captionists

Some persons who are hard of hearing or deaf may request for the provision of real-time captioning if they do not use sign language. Real time captioning refers to simultaneous text translation and the projection of spoken languages on screens during a meeting.

Real time captioning can enhance communication not only for persons with hearing impairments but also for those who are not proficient in the primary language used in meetings. It also has the added benefit of providing an electronic record of the meeting's proceedings. Two common formats used by English language captionists are CART and C-Print. Captionists can do the captioning in a meeting with their typing equipment attached to a screen in a meeting venue. Remote real time captioning is also possible in which captionists who are not physically present at the meeting listen to the audio output of the meeting and send back text via an internet connection.

2.5.5 Arranging note takers

Note taking is an alternative, manual assistive service to captioning. It might be used in a meeting with a limited budget. Note takers take notes of the main points of a meeting and show it to those who require greater clarification of the content of what is being said. Conventionally, these notes are shown on screen via an overhead projector.

Here are some points to check when making such arrangements:

- ✓ Check:

- Which method should be utilized – real time captioning or note taking?
Which method best satisfies the needs of participants?
- Which method is available in a country where a meeting is held?
- Whether online remote real time captioning is provided or not;
- How many captionists/note takers are needed for the duration of the meeting planned;
- What kind of space and equipment is needed.
- How much it costs to hire captionists/note takers;
 - As with sign-language interpreters, captionists and note-takers should be remunerated on equal lines with translators.

2.6 Setting up the venue

Below are some points to consider when setting up a meeting venue prior to the opening of a meeting:

✓ Check:

- That table arrangements allow adequate space for wheelchair users;
- Whether there is enough space for interpreters, note takers and captionists, in convenient locations for participants who need to make use of these services;
- That meeting badges and name plates contain large enough font with contrasting colours.
- That a meeting room is scent-free. Some persons are vulnerable to strong scents. Therefore, scent-free environment posters and materials should be used where possible.

2.7 Arranging accessible transportation

If public transportation has not been created in line with universal design principles, persons with disabilities are likely to experience difficulties in finding and using accessible public transportation. It is important for meeting organizers to establish how accessible and available the public transport system is – particularly major ports of arrival and the accommodation and meeting venue.



The accessibility of a transport system does not only refer to the physical features of the transport itself but also to the transport's service hours.

If public transportation is not accessible, organizers should facilitate alternative transport for participants with mobility needs. Organizers should identify providers of accessible vehicles and book services well in advance of the start of the meeting.

2.8 Budgeting

When preparing for a meeting, a certain portion of a total budget should be allocated for acquiring services for accessibility and reasonable accommodation. If the meeting venue and other facilities have been built according to universal design, organizers might not have to bear additional costs. However, organizers might in certain cases have to pay when accessible features are not already in place. For example, if



there is not a ramp at the entrance of a meeting venue, meeting organizers might have to bear the cost of installing a portable ramp. In some cases however, the venue management might also be willing to pay some or all of these costs in the interests of making their premises more accessible to persons with disabilities.

Organizers may also need to provide accessible transport and services related to information accessibility, such as sign language interpretation and clear signage.

2.9 Sensitizing concerned staff on disability and equality

Whilst the setting up of accessible facilities and information are essential to any successful disability-inclusive meeting, of equal importance is consideration of awareness and attitudes of all those involved in a meeting.

It can be worthwhile to brief meeting organizers, volunteers, and concerned hotel and meeting venue personnel on fundamental concepts relating to disability and disability inclusiveness.

It is ideal for Disability Equality Training (DET) to be provided to all concerned from an early stage. This can help to ensure that the meeting is run with disability inclusiveness in mind at all levels of its organization.

Terminology referring to persons with disabilities

- ✓ Consider
 - “Whether all stress “personhood” and avoid identifying a person solely in terms of his/her disability;
 - Whether persons with disabilities are not regarded as victims, “cripples to be pitied”, as objects of charity or as medical cases. This should not be the case;
 - Whether persons with disabilities are not referred to in any way that:

- Could be interpreted as dehumanizing, degrading and stigmatizing – this includes conveying a view that disability is a tragedy/disaster/the end of meaningful life and that persons with disabilities should be treated as small children or persons unable to make decisions for themselves;
- Focuses on what the person cannot do;
- Describes the person as deformed/defective/ useless/somehow not a full human being, somehow “less” than others/devoid of sexuality.

See Annex 3 for a table that may be useful to meeting organizers in sensitizing staff on disability matters.

Interaction with persons with disabilities

✓ Consider

- When conversing with a wheelchair-user, especially for an extended period of time, that one does so from a similar height (that is, to avoid “talking down” to the wheelchair-user);
- When talking with a person who is deaf or a person with a hearing impairment, remember look at the person you are conversing with and be as expressive with your face and body gestures as possible. An easy mistake to make is to focus all attention on the sign language interpreter;
- When meeting a blind or visually impaired person, whether one establishes contact through verbal communication or if, culturally appropriate, to take that person’s hand and shake it. Furthermore, when walking with a blind or visually impaired person, it is acceptable to offer your elbow for guiding the person. When approaching differences in ground level, it is good to verbalize this, for example: “We are now

about to take two steps down/up". The blind person will sense the change, but it is safe practice to caution verbally as well;

- Whether one does not "drag/ push" blind persons and persons with sight impairments in an effort to help them walk. Always, ask first;
- Whether one makes an assumption that a person who has a learning or an intellectual disability has a lesser ability to manage all dimensions of life, including social relations. Indeed in many cases, persons with intellectual and learning disabilities have exceptionally strong social skills and high educational qualifications."²⁴

²⁴ See SDD/Access 2014/PGPART2/1

3. Conducting disability-inclusive meetings

To ensure a successful disability-inclusive meeting, planning and preparation are crucial – as emphasized in the previous chapter. However, diligent preparation alone will not guarantee a genuinely inclusive meeting. During the course of the meeting itself, a number of important measures should also be taken to maximize the equal participation of all in attendance. This chapter provides practical checks to consider when conducting a meeting. Additional information is also included on evaluating the successes and shortcomings of a meeting from a disability perspective. This evaluative stage is highly useful for gaining first-hand feedback on a meeting from its participants. Through the process of accruing comments and suggestions, meeting organizers can build their own best practices and incorporate lessons learned in the organization of future meetings.



3.1 Conducting a meeting

Here are some points to consider when conducting a meeting:

✓ Check:

- Whether all participants' needs are met before the opening of the meeting. If necessary, introduce assistants or volunteers for those who need additional assistance;
- That the chair outlines the content of the agenda and meeting documents at the onset of a meeting, and clearly indicates changes in topics, timings and durations of breaks and the planned closing time of a meeting;
- That the chair advises all participants of the services available (e.g., sign language interpretation, attendant care, note taking, captioning) at the start of the meeting. In this regard the chair may advise participants that interpreters will say everything that is signed, and sign everything that is said. Interpreters should not add words, edit or censor a conversation;
- That the chair asks participants to briefly introduce themselves each time they speak for the benefit of participants who have a visual impairment;
- That the chair encourages all presenters to speak clearly and at a moderate pace in order to ensure that all contributions to meetings are easy to understand and that the tasks of interpreters, interveners, note takers and captionists is as straightforward as possible.
- That the chair informs participants of the nearest emergency exits and accessible restroom facilities.
- That the chair allows time for participants to make interventions at their own speed. Some people take longer to express their ideas than others;

- That a meeting runs according to its planned schedule. If it appears as if it will not stay to schedule, inform participants;
- That the chair periodically checks with participants to ensure that a meeting's proceedings and any presentation materials are clearly understood. If any participants (whether persons with disabilities or not) express confusion over content, allow for contributors to briefly summarize and repeat their points.
- Ensure the presence of attendants and interpreters during networking breaks to allow for the inclusion and participation of all those attending.
- That the chair reminds presenters to supplement spoken information with visual information, where possible.

3.2 Evaluating a meeting

In order to gain an accurate understanding of the degree to which a meeting has been inclusive of persons with disabilities, an evaluation process can provide great insight. Even if meeting organizers have worked scrupulously to consider the planning, preparation and conduct of a meeting from a disability perspective, it is still possible – and in fact quite probable – that some aspects of accessibility and inclusiveness may have been overlooked. This is hardly surprising, especially given that the CRPD itself describes disability as an ‘evolving concept’, involving the interaction of persons with disabilities and attitudinal and environmental barriers.²⁵ Naturally then, some context-specific barriers to the disability inclusiveness of a meeting might only become apparent some way into its proceedings. Moreover, persons with disabilities themselves are naturally best equipped to recognize barriers and to provide suggestions for overcoming them.

²⁵ See preambles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006: A/RES/61/106).

An evaluation process at the end of a meeting does not necessarily require excessive resources. In fact, a straightforward evaluation form to be completed by all participants towards the end of a meeting can be sufficient to attain a wealth of feedback and suggestions for the accessibility and inclusiveness of future meetings. See Annex 2 for an example of an evaluation form.



3.2.1 Elements to consider when compiling an evaluation form:

- Where possible asking ‘to what extent’ participants would rate particular elements of a meeting as useful because it allows for the use of quantitative responses (i.e. 1. fully, 2. to a great extent, 3. somewhat, 4. to a lesser extent, 5. not at all). This allows for easily comparable feedback.
- Additionally including comment boxes allows participants to give feedback which is specific to the particular meeting in question.
- Sub-categorizing questions allows for specific and targeted responses. For example – under a general question about the accessibility of facilities, there should be an opportunity to rate and comment on websites, documentation, Braille, sign language, captioning, physical accessibility and other elements of a meeting.
- Ensure that the evaluation form itself is produced in accessible formats for participants with disabilities.

Conclusion

This Operational Guide was written with the aim of encouraging member States and other stakeholders to organize meetings with due consideration of the perspective of persons with disabilities. The Guide has provided information on key concepts relating to disability-inclusive meetings. It has also offered practical recommendations with regard to the planning and preparation of disability inclusive meetings. In addition, the Guide has sought to outline key considerations for the conduct of meetings themselves. Finally, it has offered advice for evaluating the disability inclusiveness of meetings in order to build best practices for the planning of future meetings.

Organizing disability-inclusive meetings is likely to be, for the near future at least, a continual process. The needs of individuals with disabilities will develop and vary as the world in which they live changes. Moreover, since persons with disabilities are an extraordinarily diverse group, their requirements are highly individualized. Accordingly, a “one size fits all” is unlikely to be effective. Every meeting can nonetheless build on the lessons of the previous one, enabling meeting organizers to organize more and more genuinely inclusive meetings.

Technological advances, appearing at an exponential speed, hold great potential for the development of new and innovative devices and systems for persons with disabilities to be able to better access the physical environment, public transportation, information, communication and services. Thus, meeting organizers stand to benefit greatly from showing an interest in such technological developments.

Disability itself is a dynamic and evolving phenomenon. One can only speculate

about the kinds of impairments which might emerge in the future; as disability inclusiveness receives greater attention on both a cultural scale and in the fields of science and technology, some disabilities may become less prominent and severe. In other cases, ageing populations and more frequent natural disasters are likely to produce a greater number of persons with disabilities.

Precisely because of these uncertainties, it is vital to involve persons with diverse disabilities in decision making processes about matters which so clearly and deeply affect them.

As discussed in the introduction, the enhanced effort towards adopting a disability perspective in the context of meetings will enable organizers and participants to widen their thinking about the world and to embrace and benefit from the knowledge and insight of persons with diverse background.

We hope that this Guide can contribute to achieve the aim.



Glossary

Access audits of public buildings: Audits of plans, construction, maintenance and related services provided on premises. Access audits include recommendations for making the building fully accessible, and required actions to be taken to this end within a reasonable timeframe.

Accessible formats: The provision of informational materials in mediums accessible to persons with diverse disabilities. Examples include Braille versions of text, large print, and plain-language audio and captioning.

Accessibility: Access for persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.

Accessibility Checklist: In order to confirm the accessibility of a meeting venue, a checklist of requirements can be compiled and tailored to specific guests' needs. An accessibility assessment should include the meeting space and facility in general. Numerous example checklist points are included in this Guide.

Alternative text (Alt-text): When a PowerPoint slide contains non-text elements, namely images, graphics, logos or flow charts, those elements are inaccessible for people who are blind and using assistive technology, such as screen readers. These elements should be described in Alt-text that is text attached to the image but hidden from sight; typically used to provide a narrative description of the item for persons with visual impairment.

Assistive device: A device that has been designed, manufactured or adapted to assist a person in performing a particular task. Examples include white canes, hearing aids, crutches, wheelchairs and tricycles.

Assistive listening systems: The use of devices such as those for amplification of speech and the establishment of more accessible sound to noise ratios.

Attendant care: Personal assistance for individuals with physical disabilities, in order to aid them in the performance of everyday activities such as using bathroom facilities, mobility, eating, dressing and taking medication.

Auditory requirements: The specific needs of a deaf, deafened or hard of hearing person. In the context of a meeting, this might include the provision of captioning services, sign language interpreters and assistive listening systems.

Barriers: Persons with disabilities face a multitude of social, economic, physical, political and attitudinal barriers to their full and effective participation in education, employment, decision making and other essential activities.

Barrier-free: Both information and a physical environment that is designed or adapted to remove the above barriers.

Braille: A tactile medium of reading texts for blind persons and persons with other visual impairments. Braille is embossed on paper and has more recently also become available on computer screens and other electronic devices thanks to refreshable Braille displays. Braille can be written with a slate and stylus, a Braille writer or on computers that print with a Braille embosser.

Captionists: Communication facilitators who provide real-time typed captioning of spoken language to allow understanding by participants with hearing impairments. Two common formats used by English language captionists are CART and C-Print.

Communication: Language, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, and accessible multimedia, as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, after five years of negotiation, through resolution 61/106 on 13 December 2006. The convention's fundamental aim is to establish and safeguard protection of persons with disabilities and guarantee their basic human rights.

DAISY: Digital Accessible Information Systems allow books and written materials to be listened to in an audible format based on synthesized voice or human narration. Users can navigate written materials using DAISY players, computers with DAISY software, mobile phones and mp3 players.

Deaf: Severe or total hearing loss, resulting in minimal or no functional hearing.

Deaf-blind: A combination of vision and hearing loss, to varying degrees of severity.

Deafened: A deafened person loses their sense of hearing as an adult, and accordingly experiences a different set of issues than a person who has been deaf since birth or childhood.

Disability: An evolving concept, disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Disability Equality Training (DET): Courses developed by persons with disabilities to provide information and raise awareness about life with disabilities.

Discrimination on the basis of disability: Any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It encompasses all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation.

Diverse disability groups/persons with diverse disabilities: These terms point to the large heterogeneity among persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities include not only blind persons, crutch users, wheelchair users and deaf persons, but also persons with intellectual, learning and developmental disabilities, persons with autism, persons with dyslexia, persons who are deaf-blind, persons with multiple disabilities, and persons with extensive disabilities. Persons with disabilities include groups that are marginalized, such as children with disabilities, women with disabilities, persons with disabilities living in slums and persons with disabilities living in remote or rural areas.

Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs): Disabled People's Organisations are representative groups of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities and their relatives constitute a majority of the staff, board and volunteers of these organizations. A primary aim of these organizations is the empowerment and self-advocacy of persons with disabilities.

Evacuation plans: Procedures for vacating a premises in a short time frame in the case of an emergency. These should be inclusive of the needs of persons with disabilities and should be clearly communicated at the beginning of meetings.

Hard of hearing: Describes a less severe degree of hearing loss than deaf or deafened.

Hearing impaired: This general term can denote both slight and profound hearing loss. Many persons self-describe as 'deaf' or 'hard of hearing' rather than 'hearing impaired', because of the implicit emphasis on deficiency or incompleteness carried by the term.

Impairment: A difficulty in body function or structure that is permanent or temporary. As a result of environmental and attitudinal barriers, impairments lead to disabilities.

Intellectual disabilities: Neurodevelopmental impairments affecting intellectual and adaptive functioning.

Inclusive environment: An environment which has either been designed and built with the principles of universal design from inception, or else has been adapted to be inclusive of the accessibility and participation of all persons.

Inclusive participation: The removal or minimization of barriers and changing of attitudes to ensure the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society on an equal basis with others.

Audio induction loop/ audio-frequency induction loop/ hearing loop: Assistive technology for persons with hearing impairments. A loop carrying baseband audio-frequency currents amplifies a target sound (for example, the contributor speaking in a meeting) so that listeners can hear the sound clearer and louder.

Interpreter: A professional who assists a deaf or deafened person in communicating with others.

Intervener: A professional who works with a deaf-blind individual to facilitate understanding and communication.

Language: Spoken and signed languages and other forms of non-spoken languages.

Learning disabilities: A group of impairments of academic, language and speech skills. Examples include dyslexia (reading), dyscalculia (mathematics), and dysgraphia (writing).

Mainstreaming: The systematic integration of the priorities and requirements of persons with disabilities in all policies and general measures.

Marked-up file: Files such as text documents, video and audio files, which have been annotated with comments, arrows and post-it notes to add further clarity or to prepare them for review.

Mobility aid: A device created to aid walking or movement of persons with mobility impairments. Examples include canes, crutches, wheelchairs and scooters.

Mobility impairment: A difficulty in a person's ability to move, necessitating the use of a mobility aid. Mobility impairment may result from conditions such as cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, diabetes and muscular dystrophy.

Note taking: Persons with a range of disabilities may benefit from note taking support during a meeting, in order to allow the individual better understanding of and reference to the essential points being made.

Persons with disabilities: Individuals who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Plain language: Words in documents are direct and organized logically. Sentences are constructed clearly and simply. Only necessary words are used and long sentences with complex construction are avoided.

Print Disability: Difficulty reading printed text due to visual, physical, perceptual, developmental, cognitive or learning disabilities.

Psychosocial disabilities: Mental illnesses which are caused or exacerbated by social experience, in addition to cognitive and behavioural functions.

Real-time captioning: An instant translation of spoken language into written text, displayed on a computer screen or projected onto a larger display surface. Real-time captioning allows participants in meetings to understand what is said. This may be done by a captionist who is physically present at the meeting, or sometimes by a

remote captionist who receives an audio signal and relays the captioned text via the internet.

Reasonable accommodation: Necessary and appropriate modification and adjustment not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Sans serif: Fonts/typfaces which do not have serifs – the tail-like strokes at the start and end of a letter. The most widely used serif font is Times New Roman. Examples of sans serif fonts are Arial, Helvetica, Verdana, Futura, Univers and Franklin Gothic. The Canadian National Institute for the Blind has developed an accessible design standard for printed material, called Clear Print (see reference below).

Scent-free environment posters: Posters and other materials which are purposefully manufactured without scented products. Chemicals used in scented products can cause medical reactions in individuals with fragrance sensitivities, asthma, allergies and additional conditions and impairments.

Sign language: A language which uses body language and physical movement to communicate. Sign language makes use of hand shapes, hand movement, arms and body, as well as facial expressions to convey meaning. Sign language varies from country to country, with an estimated 137 international variants.

Space allowance: The careful planning of physical layouts of venues to allow inclusive and unhindered movement of persons with mobility disabilities.

Universal design: The design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. “Universal design” does not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

Visual impairment: A reduced ability to see, which cannot be adequately alleviated by glasses or conventional medicine.

This glossary was based on definitions from the following sources:

<http://www.ddrcco.com/resources-and-training/glossary-of-developmental-disability-terms.php>

<http://disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/files/library/Campbell-dis-equality-training.pdf>

http://www.edf-feph.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=12536

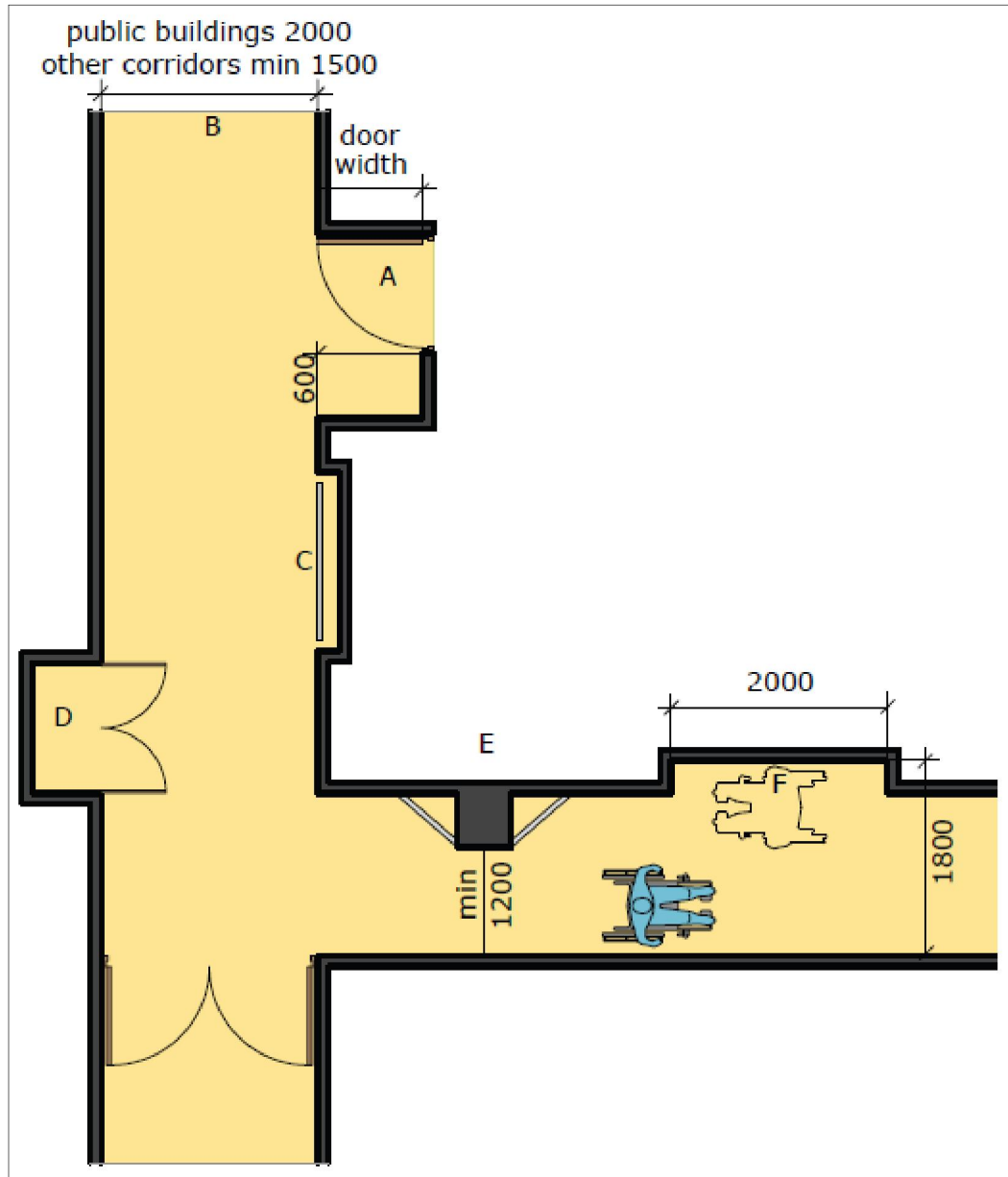
<http://www.cnib.ca/en/services/resources/Clearprint/Documents/CNIB%20Clear%20Print%20Guide.pdf>

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/dynamics/marketing-customer-center/mark-up-files.aspx>

<https://www.washington.edu/doit/glossary-disability-related-terms>

Annex

Annex 1



Annex 2

Accessibility Evaluation: Satisfaction with accessibility facilities and services					
1. To what extent did the following facilities and services satisfy your accessibility needs?	Fully (1)	To a great extent (2)	Some-what (3)	To a lesser extent (4)	Not at all (5)
a. Website for the meeting					
Please provide any comments:					
b. Documentation in accessible formats					
Please provide any comments:					
c. Information accessibility during the Meeting through finger					

Braille, sign language interpretation or real-time captioning					
Please provide any comments:					
d. Physical accessibility of the venue					
Please provide any comments:					
2. Please provide any additional comments on the Meeting or suggestions on improvements, including for better accessibility :					

Annex 3

PREFERRED TERMINOLOGY	AVOID PHRASES LIKE
<p>Person with a disability/persons with disabilities (term used in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)</p> <p>A woman/ man with a disability/disabilities</p>	<p>The disabled / disabled people or disabled person / handicapped / handicapped person/ invalid</p>
<p>Person born with a disability</p> <p>Person with a disability from birth</p>	<p>Birth defects / deformity</p>
<p>Disability community</p>	<p>Disabled community</p>
<p>Person who is blind (blindness refers to total loss of sight)</p> <p>Person with visual impairment (visual impairment refers to partial loss of sight within a range from slight to severe)</p>	<p>The blind/the visually impaired</p>
<p>A deaf person / deaf community (deafness refers to total loss of hearing)</p> <p>Person with hearing impairment (hearing</p>	<p>The deaf /deafmute/deaf and dumb</p>

PREFERRED TERMINOLOGY	AVOID PHRASES LIKE
impairment refers to partial loss of hearing within a range from slight to severe)	
Person with a physical disability /person with a mobility impairment / crutch user /person who uses a walker	Cripple/crippled
Wheelchair user	Confined to a wheelchair /Wheelchair-bound
Person with cerebral palsy (cerebral palsy may be replaced with the name of another condition, such as for instance, spinal cord injury, muscular dystrophy, etc.) Person with multiple disabilities	Afflicted by multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, etc. Suffers from multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, etc.
Seizure	Attack, spells, fits
Person with muscle spasms	Spastic
A person of short stature Little person / little people	Dwarf / dwarves / midget(s)
Person with an intellectual disability Person with learning disabilities Person with developmental disabilities	Idiot Mentally retarded/ slow A retard

PREFERRED TERMINOLOGY	AVOID PHRASES LIKE
Person with autism	Crazy Maniac
Person with mental health issue(s) Person with depression Person with schizophrenia Survivor of psychiatric services	Crazy/ demented /mad Culture-specific descriptions, e.g., “gone with the fairies”
Person with Down’s Syndrome	Mongoloid, mongolism
Accessible seating, parking, washrooms	Handicapped seating, parking, washrooms
Person without a disability Non-disabled person	Normal / able-bodied (implies that persons with disabilities are abnormal and not able) “Healthy” -- when used for comparison with the "disabled" – “Healthy” implies that the person with a disability is unhealthy. In fact, many persons with disabilities are in excellent health.
Reasonable Accommodation ²⁶	Burden

Annex 4

Accessibility Request Form (sample)

I. General

1. What type of disability do you have? (Please specify)

II. Mobility Requirements

2. Do you require wheelchair-accessible transport service from the airport to your hotel and back to the airport? YES [] NO []

If yes, please provide the following flight details:

Flight number:..... Date and time of arrival:

.....

Flight number:..... Date and time of departure:

.....

3. Do you require wheelchair-accessible transport service from the hotel to UNCC and back to the hotel? YES [] NO []

If yes, provide the name of the hotel for which you have a reservation:

.....

III. Language and media requirements

The following may be provided in the English language only.

4. Do you require:

4.1 Sign language interpretation? YES [] NO []

4.2 Meeting documents in digital files (.doc/.rtf)? YES [] NO []

4.3 Braille documents? YES [] NO []