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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 is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2012/11, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on mainstreaming disability in the development agenda at the fifty-first session of the Commission for Social Development as an input to the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development to be held in 2013. The report presents selected examples of advances made at the international, regional and national levels in mainstreaming disability in evolving policy frameworks for inclusive development. The report concludes that, in order to advance such policy frameworks further, follow-up strategies must be introduced at all levels and suggests elements for inclusion in such strategies. The report provides specific recommendations on action at the national, regional and global level to promote the effective implementation of the outcome of the High-level Meeting, specifying actions for Member States, the United Nations system, civil society and all other stakeholders.



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I. Introduction

1. In resolution 2010/13, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to report to the Commission for Social Development, at its fifty-first session, on the progress made in mainstreaming disability in the development agenda. Although the Secretary-General reports to the Commission on a biannual basis,¹ the present report was requested, on an exceptional basis, as an input to the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development, to be held on 23 September 2013.

2. The report of the Secretary-General before the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, entitled “Realization of the Millennium Development Goals and internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond” (A/67/211), outlined the context for the High-level Meeting, which takes place against the backdrop of ongoing discussions regarding a development agenda beyond 2015. The Meeting, which is expected to result in a concise, action-oriented outcome document,² will provide the international community with a critical opportunity to commit to the inclusion of disability in the emerging development framework. Further priority areas were identified in the report of the Secretary-General for inclusion in the outcome of the high-level meeting: (a) strengthening and applying the international normative framework on disability; (b) promoting accessibility for inclusive and sustainable development; (c) addressing gaps in capacity-building; and (d) addressing the situation of persons with disabilities through inclusive monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

3. The present report seeks to complement the recommendations included in the report of the Secretary-General. It considers actions that could be taken to realize the commitment of the international community to mainstreaming disability in all aspects of development. In so doing, it draws on the experience of the United Nations system in the mainstreaming of other cross-cutting issues, including its efforts in gender mainstreaming, and proposes the development of follow-up frameworks to support implementation of existing relevant policy frameworks.

4. The present report further sets out options of elements to be considered in follow-up strategies to guide development of such frameworks, enhance coordination of activities among all stakeholders, improve accountability, address capacity requirements and develop indicators to monitor and track progress. The development of such frameworks would accelerate the mainstreaming of disability in the development agenda, including the implementation of existing commitments and the outcomes of the High-level Meeting.

¹ In his past three reports to the Council (E/CN.5/2012/6, E/CN.5/2010/6 and E/CN.5/2008/6), the Secretary-General has focused on the status of mainstreaming disability in the development agenda.

² See General Assembly resolution 66/124.

II. Strengthening linkages between policy and practice

5. In recent years, advances have been made by Member States, entities of the United Nations system and civil society organizations in the mainstreaming of disability in development frameworks and processes.³

6. In 2010, in his report on mainstreaming disability in the development agenda (E/CN.5/2010/6), the Secretary-General assessed the extent to which disability has been mainstreamed in international development cooperation. An increase in the trend towards the formulation of policies and guidelines on disability-inclusive development cooperation was noted in the report, although the conclusion was that only limited information was available on the implementation of such policy frameworks.

7. While the intention of the present report is not to assess the extent to which disability has been mainstreamed in the overall development agenda, the following section provides selected examples of initiatives taken since 2010 that have contributed to the promotion of disability inclusion in development programming at the international, regional and national levels. It also provides examples of good practices to illustrate practical steps taken to implement international norms and standards relating to disability.

A. National level

8. Increasing numbers of Member States have introduced measures to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities, as the number of States parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the Convention) continues to grow. These include harmonization of domestic legislation and implementation of national policies and programmes and other appropriate measures to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities. For example, Burkina Faso, Guyana and Uruguay have reported on the adoption of specific laws to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, while Mexico has adopted a general law on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

9. A number of States have reported on progress in developing and strengthening both national policy frameworks and programmes to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society. These include the drafting and implementation of action plans and strategies, tailored to their specific national contexts, to close the gap between legislation and practice, based on the principle of inclusive development. Such plans allow for the formulation of comprehensive policy and targeted actions in the key areas of education, health, social protection, independent living and access to services, to promote and support the implementation of mainstreaming disability across all sectors. Approaches taken in the formulation of national strategic plans vary greatly from country to country, as do efforts towards effective implementation, accountability and measurability of their success.

10. For instance, Brazil has developed a national plan, “Living without Limits”, which sets targets for implementation up to 2014 and outlines a projected budget of resources that would need to be invested to achieve the targets in each of the key

³ See A/64/180, A/65/173, A/66/128, A/67/211, E/CN.5/2010/6 and E/CN.5/2011/9.

sectors. For example in the education sector, the plan projects a total of R\$ 1.8 billion to be invested by 2014 towards actions such as the delivery of accessible school transportation services; architectural adjustments to public schools and federal institutions of higher education to improve accessibility; the implementation of new multifunctional classrooms and upgrading of existing classrooms; and the offer of up to 150,000 openings for persons with disabilities in federal vocational and technology training courses.

11. Spain has adopted a strategy for the period from 2012 to 2020 to advance universal accessibility. The principal focus of the strategy is to ensure access by persons with disabilities to transport, information technologies, communication systems and other services on an equal basis with others. Some Governments, including those of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, have devised national plans on the basis of regional guidelines and standards, such as the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, 2006-2015. Similarly, regional continental plans, such as the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, continue to serve as important guidance tools for action at the national level. For example, Mozambique is currently developing its second national action plan for disability for the period from 2012 to 2019, which is informed by various national and international instruments and inputs from all stakeholders.

12. Member States have also reported on the establishment of specific mechanisms or institutions to oversee the implementation of national disability strategies in light of the Convention. Such bodies are often mandated to monitor and evaluate implementation of disability-related laws or policies and to make recommendations on existing services, incorporating disability dimensions to improve equal access for persons with disabilities. Some States have designated focal points within Government tasked with ensuring coordination and cooperation between ministries and agencies, civil society and other stakeholders.

13. Governments also provide examples of efforts to promote the mainstreaming of disability in international development cooperation and development assistance. For example, as a follow-up to the implementation of the first national action plan for persons with disabilities in Kosovo (2009-2011), Italian Development Cooperation provided technical assistance focused on strengthening, monitoring and assessing the plan, as well as on sharing knowledge and good practices. One element of this initiative was the use of the World Health Organization international classification of functioning, disability and health, introducing a standardized approach to classification of the condition of persons with disabilities in Kosovo.

14. In 2010, the United States of America established the disability and inclusive development office within its Policy, Planning and Learning Bureau to promote the mainstreaming of disability in the work of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The related guidelines, entitled “Promoting disability inclusion in USAID missions”,⁴ encourage each USAID mission to take two steps towards this objective: firstly, to appoint a disability focal point at the senior level and secondly, to develop and utilize a “disability-inclusion action plan”. The action plan of the mission should include concrete actions and timelines to reduce barriers to ensure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities into all USAID programmes and operations.

⁴ http://transition.usaid.gov/about_usaid/disability/disinclusion_plan_intro.pdf.

B. Regional level

1. New Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities for the period from 2013 to 2022

15. In October 2012, at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (2003-2012), Asian Pacific countries endorsed a new strategic framework of action, the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.⁵ The strategy promotes the key principles of the Convention and provides policy direction on aspects related to legislative and administrative measures, disability-inclusive development policies and programmes and budget allocation, among others.

16. The regional strategy provides a framework of 10 interrelated goals and resulting targets for Governments to chart a plan of action suited to their national context. Those goals and targets are further guided by indicators for measuring progress. The goals and targets themselves cover a number of sectors, including poverty, social protection and employment, participation, accessibility, children with disabilities, gender equality, disaster-preparedness and management, data and statistics, ratification and implementation of the Convention and development cooperation at all levels.

17. Time-bound, measurable targets monitored through the collection and analysis of disability data can accelerate the achievement of commitment at the national, regional and global levels. Those targets can be regarded as the core components of any global follow-up framework resulting from the High-level Meeting in 2013. Clear targets and indicators are critical to guiding the coordination of efforts and the continuous monitoring of progress, as well as for assessing the impact of policies and programmes and adjusting the allocation of resources accordingly. This will maximize the potential impact on the goal of equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities on the ground.

18. The drafting of the Incheon Strategy benefited from inputs from Governments, civil society and other stakeholders, which were obtained through regional forums, such as the ESCAP Committee on Social Development at its second session held in Bangkok, from 19 to 21 October 2010 and the regional stakeholder consultations for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, held in Bangkok from 14 to 16 December 2011. Feedback from the responses of various stakeholders to an ESCAP regional survey on the final review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons also provided valuable information for drafting the Incheon Strategy.

2. New African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, African Union Disability Architecture, African Disability Forum

19. With a view to addressing better the gaps between policy and practice in realizing the goals and objectives established for the second African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010-2019), the revised Continental Plan of Action of the

⁵ http://unescapsdd.org/sites/test/files/RSC_INGOTS_20111129%20%20final.pdf.

African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010-2019) was adopted at the third session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Social Development, held in Addis Ababa from 26 to 30 November 2012. The participants in the meeting also discussed specific measures to strengthen institutional arrangements for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Plan of Action.⁶

20. On the basis of experience and lessons learned, Member States and the African Union, in consultation and cooperation with other stakeholders, including organizations of persons with disabilities, drafted the revised Continental Plan of Action through which the stakeholders recommitted themselves to the goals of the Decade: full participation, equality and empowerment of persons with disabilities.

21. It is envisaged that the implementation of the new Continental Plan of Action will be realized through a newly-established African Union Disability Architecture, which consists of three major elements: (a) a legal component, i.e., a new regional protocol on the rights of persons with disabilities; (b) a programmatic component, i.e., the Continental Plan of Action, which identifies key priority areas for action, expected outcomes, performance indicators and means of verification for each priority area and the key actors responsible for advancing the implementation of the Disability Architecture; and (c) the institutional component, including the African Union Commission, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, member States, regional economic communities and organizations of persons with disabilities.

22. In conjunction with the African Union experts meeting and the third Conference of Ministers of Social Development, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on disability of the Commission for Social Development, together with Governments, African Union agencies, African regional and subregional organizations of persons with disabilities, academic institutional networks and development partners, organized a consultative meeting in Addis Ababa on 28 and 29 November 2012. The meeting saw the launch of the African Disability Forum, which aims to raise awareness further, strengthen the knowledge base and evidence-based research, support capacity-building and establish and support a partnership between multi-stakeholders within and beyond the African continent to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and a disability-inclusive development agenda in Africa and all over the world.

3. European Disability Strategy, a renewed commitment to a barrier-free Europe (2010-2020)

23. On 15 November 2010, the European Commission adopted a new European disability strategy for the period from 2010 to 2020,⁷ with a focus on breaking down existing barriers that have prevented persons with disabilities from participating in society on an equal basis. The new strategy was formulated taking into account lessons learnt and the findings from the evaluation of the implementation of the previous European Disability Action Plan (2003-2010), as well as the implications

⁶ See the concept note on the third session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Social Development, available from <http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/Concept%20note%20-%20English.pdf>.

⁷ *European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe*, communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

of the European Union findings of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Preparation for the new strategy has involved a broad-based public consultation carried out through an online questionnaire seeking opinions, both from persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, on critical thematic areas, including accessibility, employment, education, health care, free movement, independent living, institutionalization and services in the community, participation in public and political life, adequate standards of living and social protection.

24. The new strategy requires member States and the European Union to take action in key areas, including accessibility, participation, funding, cooperation between member States and civil society, awareness-raising and data collection and monitoring. It also seeks to identify and promote successful support structures set up by member States at the national level. The strategy includes a list of concrete actions and a timetable. The European Commission, in accordance with its mandate, will need to report regularly on achievements and progress in implementing the strategy, in compliance with its international obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which the European Union is a party.

C. Subregional frameworks

25. Subregional intergovernmental bodies, such as the secretariats of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Pacific Islands Forum and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, have been developing complementary subregional policy instruments, including the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability, 2010-2015. In the Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of Persons with Disabilities adopted at the nineteenth ASEAN summit held in Bali, Indonesia, on 17 November 2011, Heads of State and Government of ASEAN member States proclaimed the period from 2011 to 2020 as the ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities and agreed to maintain subregional cooperation on disability.

D. United Nations system

26. In late 2011, the United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was established to support joint programming at the country level for the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the promotion of disability-inclusive internationally agreed development goals. The initiative has provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen collaboration within and between the different entities of the United Nations system and to promote joint action with national partners by pooling resources to mainstream disability within the work of the organization.

27. A multi-donor trust fund was launched to support and manage resources to carry out the programmatic activities of the partnership, with the main sponsor being the Government of Australia. Since then, the Governments of Finland, Greece and Sweden have also committed resources to the fund.⁸

⁸ For more information on the operationalization of the fund, see: <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/RPD00>.

28. An analysis of the first round of proposals for funding, which included submissions from 30 countries, highlighted the key challenges in addressing the gap between policy and practice identified by United Nations country teams. A total of 22 proposals noted the requirement for developing disability data and statistics and improving access to mainstream and targeted services as the main barriers. In addition, the lack of national capacity and of organizations of persons with disabilities (stated in 21 proposals), the development or reform of legislation and policies, relevant strategies and plans of action (stated in 19 proposals) and changing public perception and reducing the stigma associated with disability (stated in 14 proposals) were also identified as areas requiring attention to bridge the gap between policy and practice.

29. A breakdown of specific groups explicitly mentioned in the 30 country proposals has revealed that the highest number of references were to children with disabilities (16 proposals), followed by women with disabilities (10 proposals) and youth with disabilities (6 proposals).

30. In October 2012, the first round of funds was disbursed to support joint programming in six countries — Costa Rica, Indonesia, Mozambique, Republic of Moldova, Togo and Ukraine — as well as to support one regional initiative in Pacific island countries.

III. The way forward: towards strategic follow-up frameworks for the mainstreaming of disability in development

31. As noted in section II above, Member States, the United Nations system and regional intergovernmental bodies have taken significant steps towards the development of policy frameworks for the mainstreaming of disability. It is essential to the achievement of disability-inclusive development that such policy frameworks be in place at all levels. The General Assembly has, however, expressed concern about the “persistent gap between policy and practice regarding mainstreaming the perspectives of persons with disabilities”.⁹

32. Experience gained from United Nations efforts on gender mainstreaming, which has been an integral part of United Nations policy and planning since 1997 when the Economic and Social Council adopted an agreed conclusion to that effect (A/52/3/Rev.1, agreed conclusion 1997/2), has shown that policies, to be effective, must also be complemented by an action plan or a follow-up strategy.¹⁰ In the case of disability mainstreaming, the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development in 2013 could present an opportunity to set out, in its outcome document, a strategic framework for action at the international, regional, subregional and/or national levels. A follow-up framework could also be developed on the basis of consultations and input from Member States, United Nations entities and civil society organizations, particularly organizations of persons with disabilities. Such a follow-up strategy could facilitate the translation of commitments on paper into real changes on the ground.

⁹ General Assembly resolution 63/150, para. 2.

¹⁰ See Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “Baseline review on mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities into United Nations country level programming (2010)”, available from www.un.org/disabilities/documents/reports/baseline_study_2010.doc.

33. A follow-up strategy and its framework could address not only priority issues identified by the General Assembly, but also barriers to mainstreaming disability that have been identified by Member States, entities of the United Nations system and civil society and draw upon examples provided by other relevant frameworks for action, including the System-wide Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations CEB Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2012),¹¹ the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific and other approaches, as described in section II above.

34. At the level of the United Nations system, following the example of the System-wide Action Plan, the development of common system indicators and measurement protocols would facilitate assessment of the performance of the United Nations system and allow experiences and lessons learned to be shared across United Nations departments and organizations.

35. In this regard, a follow-up framework on the mainstreaming of disability in development could include the following elements.

A. Monitoring and evaluation

36. The establishment of evaluation criteria, including time-bound targets and indicators disaggregated by disability, is necessary to assess whether goals and objectives have been achieved. A key component of results-based management is the formulation of goals and objectives, which will comprise the framework to guide the work of Member States, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental or regional organizations and civil society.

37. The development of targets and indicators will be consistent with calls from the General Assembly to Governments and United Nations bodies to include disability issues and persons with disabilities in reviews of progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals; to step up efforts to include in their assessment the extent to which persons with disabilities have been able to benefit from efforts to achieve the Goals;¹² and to strengthen the collection and compilation of national data and information about the situation of persons with disabilities.¹³ Similarly, the Economic and Social Council has urged Member States to mainstream disability into the design, implementation and monitoring of national development policies, programmes and strategies and to conduct reviews and assessments, analysing the extent to which disability has been mainstreamed effectively into their development agenda, with a view to identifying best practices and eliminating gaps between policy and implementation.¹⁴

38. In preparing targets and indicators, lessons may be drawn from the Incheon Strategy, summarized in section II above. The report on Disability and the Millennium Development Goals published in 2011,¹⁵ may serve as a further resource. The report

¹¹ Available from <http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SWAP.pdf>.

¹² General Assembly resolutions 65/186, para. 8 and 64/131, para. 5.

¹³ General Assembly resolution 65/186, para. 13.

¹⁴ Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/13, para. 7 (a) and (b).

¹⁵ *Disability and the Millennium Development Goals*, (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.11.IV.10).

builds upon the targets and indicators of the Goals, presenting linked disability indicators based on currently available global data on the situation of persons with disabilities.

39. In its compilation of good practices for including persons with disabilities in all aspects of development efforts (CRPD/CSP/2011/CRP.1), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs put forward a recommendation that Member States and the United Nations system should include disability-sensitive indicators related to the accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities in action plans and other national, regional and international road maps and strategies. The participation of civil society, and in particular of organizations of persons with disabilities, in the creation and monitoring of such indicators is a key component of the process, crucial for ensuring accountability.

B. Guiding capacity-building efforts at all levels for key stakeholders to strengthen competency in disability mainstreaming

40. The successful implementation of policy frameworks turns on the capacity of individuals and institutions. The Secretary-General recognized this in his report to the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities (A/67/211), in which it was made clear that to advance disability-inclusive development, stakeholders at all levels, including Governments, the United Nations system, other international organizations and civil society organizations, must have the appropriate knowledge, experience and skills to translate international commitments into outcomes on the ground. This finding is consistent with earlier calls by the General Assembly to Member States and United Nations entities to promote and strengthen national capacity, in particular in developing countries, with regard to the situation of persons with disabilities.¹⁶ The Economic and Social Council has urged the United Nations system further to support, as appropriate, national and regional efforts and plans to promote capacity-building and Member States to conduct educational and training activities for all those involved in the development agenda, in order to further the inclusion of persons with disabilities.¹⁷

41. Notwithstanding the express commitment by the General Assembly, at present stakeholders at all levels frequently lack the capacity to include and mainstream disability adequately in the implementation of international and national development policies and programmes and their monitoring and evaluation. In his report, the Secretary-General noted that Member States, United Nations entities and organizations of persons with disabilities had identified lack of capacity as a key obstacle to the mainstreaming of disability in development.

42. An effective follow-up strategy to advancing the mainstreaming of disability in development should, therefore, include a focus on capacity development. Capacity assessment can provide a basis for the creation of tailored approaches to capacity development that may include training packages and programmes, resource

¹⁶ See General Assembly resolutions 65/186, para. 14, 64/131, para. 10 (a) and 63/150, para. 4 (e).

¹⁷ Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/13, para. 7.

manuals or toolkits and the provision of technical support, especially to developing countries.

43. Efforts to advance capacity development for disability mainstreaming may also draw upon lessons from the System-wide Action Plan, which includes indicators for both assessments of capacity and capacity development. In the case of the former, the indicators focus on how comprehensively assessments are carried out and whether capacity development plans are in place. The latter indicators focus on the breadth of relevant mandatory training programmes, including the orientation of senior managers.¹⁸

44. Mechanisms to ensure accountability are an essential element for ensuring delivery on mandates. The system-wide approach of the United Nations includes governance instruments which cover all aspects of accountability, ranging from mandated objectives to the delivery of results.¹⁹

45. The General Assembly has specifically called upon the United Nations system to enhance “accountability, including at the highest levels of decision-making, in the work of mainstreaming disability in the development agenda, including in the assessment of the impact of development efforts on the situation of persons with disabilities”.²⁰

46. This was further emphasized in the assessment undertaken in 2010 by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the inclusion of disability in the work of United Nations country teams. The study found that experience gained in the context of several cross-cutting themes demonstrated that the development of minimum standards which clearly set out the expectations for country teams had proven to be useful both to guide their work and to support increased accountability.²¹

47. For these reasons, the strengthening or creation of relevant processes and mechanisms with minimum accountability standards would be an important component of a follow-up framework for the mainstreaming of disability in development at all levels. Potential elements of accountability for inclusion in a follow-up strategy include the development of policies on the mainstreaming of disability; the development of plans of action to implement such policies; the development of mechanisms to ensure accountability at a senior level for results in mainstreaming disability; carrying out audits to assess the extent to which organizations and their staff are meeting the goals and targets related to the mainstreaming of disability in development; and linking the mainstreaming of disability to the performance evaluation of relevant staff.

C. Support for improved coordination among key actors at all levels

48. Given the number and range of stakeholders at the international, regional, national and local levels and the complexity of work and variety of roles and

¹⁸ Pages 34-36 of the section on performance indicators technical notes.

¹⁹ See Department of Management, “Accountability in the UN Secretariat”, April 2012, available from http://www.un.org/en/hq/dm/pdfs/RFS_Accountability.pdf.

²⁰ Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/13, para. 8 (c).

²¹ Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Baseline Review on Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into UN Country Level Programming (2010).

specializations involved, coordination of efforts is key to the successful mainstreaming of disability in development. In recognition of this, due consideration is given in the Convention to the establishment or designation of a coordination mechanism within Governments to facilitate implementation efforts in different sectors and at different levels (article 33). The General Assembly has encouraged Governments further to develop and accelerate the exchange of information, guidelines, standards, best practices, legislative measures and government policies regarding disability issues.²² The Economic and Social Council has called upon entities of the United Nations system to share their best practices, information, tools and methodologies on the mainstreaming of disability in their activities, in order to reach a coherent and coordinated approach to disability issues within the United Nations operational framework.²³

49. In recent years, significant efforts have been made at all levels to improve coordination in the promotion and realization of the rights of persons with disabilities in society and development. At the United Nations, existing coordination efforts include the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, formed in 2007, which has contributed to advancing a more coherent approach to disability-inclusive development throughout the United Nations system. In an effort to coordinate the integration of disability into the United Nations operational framework for development, the Group worked closely with the United Nations Development Group in 2010 to develop a guidance note on integrating the rights of persons with disabilities in United Nations programming at country level for United Nations country teams. At the national level, as noted in section II above, a number of Governments have created coordination mechanisms to facilitate implementation of the Convention and a number of regional mechanisms also support coordination at the regional level.

50. Notwithstanding such efforts, a strategy for action should reinforce the need for coordination and coherence, as ongoing and systematic coordination efforts are an essential aspect of the successful mainstreaming of disability in development.

51. Disability-inclusive development can also be advanced by sharing existing information. The utility of existing research and information, including statistical data, research publications and information on best practices, is maximized by their broad dissemination. Effective distribution includes making such materials and information, as well as international instruments such as the Convention, the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, as widely available in different languages and accessible formats as possible.

52. Efforts to share good practices resulted in the published compilation in 2011 of best practices for including persons with disabilities in all aspects of development efforts (CRPD/CSP/2011/CRP.1). Civil society initiatives to share best practices include the Handicap International “Making it Work” database, which documents examples of good practices and analyses how they can be replicated or scaled up.

53. Within the United Nations system, the approach taken in the System-wide Action Plan provides a useful example of information-sharing. The Plan anticipates the establishment of a knowledge management system that includes the experiences,

²² General Assembly resolution 65/186, para. 12.

²³ Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/13, para 8 (a).

expertise and practices of United Nations entities in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. The resource is intended to serve as an asset for technical and advisory services, including in-country training.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

54. The High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development, to be held in 2013, will provide the international community with a critical opportunity to commit to the inclusion of disability in the emerging United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. The report of the Secretary-General to the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly on realization of the Millennium Development Goals and internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities (A/67/211) identified the four priority areas to be addressed in this regard: strengthening and applying the international normative framework on disability; promoting accessibility for inclusive and sustainable development; addressing gaps in capacity-building; and assessing the situation of persons with disabilities through inclusive monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

55. The present report has focused on the importance of developing follow-up strategies to accelerate the mainstreaming of disability in development. Specific recommendations are set out below for the consideration of all stakeholders.

56. The United Nations system, in collaboration with other stakeholders, should take a coordinated approach to the future implementation of an outcome document of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development, including by developing coherent, system-wide targets and indicators to measure performance. To ensure a comprehensive approach, strategic follow-up frameworks should address planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and human resources management.

57. National coordination mechanisms may be designated in the implementation of any outcome document of the High-level Meeting. Implementation could include national follow-up strategies. Such national strategies may have a focus on accountability, results-based management, monitoring and evaluation and capacity development, and should be carried out in close consultation with, and with the participation of, relevant stakeholders, particularly organizations of persons with disabilities.

58. National strategies should include clear and measurable targets with corresponding indicators to monitor progress in implementation of any follow-up strategies.

59. The United Nations system, in collaboration with Governments and civil society, should support implementation of any outcome of the High-level Meeting by reflecting it in United Nations programming at country level, with a view to promoting joint programming to mainstream disability as a cross-cutting development issue.

60. Regional commissions and organizations should promote the implementation of any outcome document of the High-level Meeting and

support the integration of its elements into existing regional policy frameworks on disability and development.

61. A follow-up to the High-level Meeting should include a periodic review of, and reporting on, progress in a global report on the status of persons with disabilities in development, based on the existing reporting cycle of the reports of the Secretary-General on the mainstreaming of disability in the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals. Such reports could advance disability as a cross-cutting development issue and as an integral part of the global development agenda.

62. The United Nations system should contribute to implementation through its supporting role in analytical work and technical support to Governments in the following ways: (a) tracking progress and supporting the improvement of disability statistics; (b) promoting the exchange of national experiences and good practices through convening global and regional forums in collaboration with other stakeholders; (c) supporting national efforts to mainstream disability in development policies and programmes; (d) supporting awareness-raising and capacity-building to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development; (e) engaging civil society in any global, regional and national follow-up actions to the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development; and (f) improving accessibility in all aspects of the work of the United Nations.

63. All stakeholders should continue to build the capabilities of persons with disabilities, including multisectoral and multi-stakeholder partnerships, with special attention paid to private sector engagement, encouraging efforts towards disability-inclusive employment opportunities and entrepreneurship.

64. Civil society organizations, academic communities and other stakeholders that are new to disability issues are encouraged to participate in and contribute to ongoing efforts by Governments, the United Nations system and organizations of persons with disabilities in mainstreaming the disability perspective and the empowerment of persons with disabilities in the development agenda and in all aspects of the development process.