

## Bridge CRPD-SDGs Training Initiative

### Asian multi-countries - English cycle

(Bangladesh, India, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)

## Concept Note

### Background

In 2015, the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), developed the Bridge CRPD-SDGs Training Initiative, which is a unique inclusive capacity development initiative, aimed to respond to the growing demand to equip organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) to make the most of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. Such an initiative is critical to ensure that persons with disabilities engage adequately with governments and development actors to frame both policies and programs in line with the CRPD, as well as to build stronger ties with other social movements to tackle macro issues, such as public resource allocation.

The Bridge CRPD-SDGs training initiative has been piloted over the past four years in English, Spanish, French and Arabic, in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, involving over 700 people, from 92 countries, of which 413 were women, with 40% of participants and facilitators from underrepresented groups, from all different constituencies, including persons with intellectual disabilities, indigenous persons with disabilities, persons with deafblindness and persons with albinism.

The initiative has benefitted from the growing interest of disability and development stakeholders with commitment of increased number of IDDC members, in 2015 from the Disability Right Advocacy Fund (DRAF), in 2017, the Ford Foundation, in 2018 the National Lottery Community Fund (formerly Big Lottery Foundation) and in 2019 the Bridging the Gap Project.

The Bridge CRPD-SDGs is developed as an integrated, continuous and coordinated approach, which aims to:

- Advocate for 'all human rights for all persons with disabilities' with emphasis on gender equality, intersectionality and inclusion of the most marginalized groups. As reported by IDDC members, *"there is no other training like the Bridge CRPD-SDGs initiative that has purposely placed equality and inclusion for all groups of persons with disabilities as a central aim"*,

- Build a critical mass of skilled activists with disabilities from diverse constituencies, and regions, which were often left out of the system and denied access to education, and as such, may lack relevant skills to engage in actions to challenge large-scale systemic discrimination,
- Strengthen national and regional DPO coalitions in their advocacy to make governments, bilateral and donor agencies accountable to respect and promote rights of persons with disabilities and make development policies inclusive in line with CRPD.

### **Bridge CRDP-SDGs rationale and vision**

Bridge CRDP-SDGs results from common IDA and IDDC observations that, despite great achievements to advance the rights of persons with disabilities through global advocacy, inclusive societies are still far from the reality experienced by persons with disabilities, especially those living in low and middle income countries:

- Discrimination of persons with disabilities is widespread
- Advocating for ‘all human rights for all persons with disabilities’ is urgent yet also complex
- Activists with disabilities were often left out of the system and denied access to education and therefore may lack the skills to engage in action to challenge large scale systemic discrimination
- Building a critical mass of skilled disabled activists that represent diverse constituencies in all regions requires coordinated efforts

In response, Bridge CRDP-SDGs was conceived as a coordinated training investment, drawing from the resources and experiences of IDA and IDDC and their members. It builds on lessons learned from previous capacity development initiatives.

Bridge CRDP-SDGs is devised as an integrated approach:

- to bridge the capacity gap within the disability movement
- to bridge the gaps between human rights and inclusive development, i.e. between the obligations and ambitious standards stemming from the CRPD and the reality of resources-constrained and challenging environments, strained governance, competing agendas and politics at national and local levels

Bridge CRDP-SDGs also aims to create a resource space and learning environment and an Alumni group where CRPD-compliant training resources and information can be accessed and collaboratively enriched.

## **Bridge CRPD-SDGs Asian multi-countries - English cycle (Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and Laos)**

Bridge CRPD-SDGs is an intensive cross-disability training program built with, by and for DPOs, based on mobilization of participants' knowledge and is meant to be very participative. Indeed, each participant is selected in relation to her/his experience, knowledge and active contribution to the promotion of rights of persons with disabilities and is expected to actively contribute to the content of the training. In that sense, Bridge puts emphasis on inclusiveness and strives to ensure inclusive facilitation for all groups and participants.

The Bridge CRPD SDGs Asian cycle is co-organized by IDA, IDA and its members, together with IDDC and its members (in particular the Disabled People's Organization Denmark - DPOD, CBM and HI), along with Transforming Communities for and TCI Asia - with financial support from the Open Society Foundations, CBM Switzerland, DPOD, DFID - through the Disability Inclusive Development - DID Programme, and MOFA Finland.

In the region, the first Bridge CRPD-SDGs training (South East Asia) was piloted and delivered to 30 disability activists from 10 countries including Pakistan and Laos in 2015/2016. Additionally, disability activists from Nepal and Pakistan have gone through the Bridge CRPD-SDGs ToT (Training of Trainers) which is a process tailored to ensure that by the end of the process each trainee is in a position to be a Bridge CRPD-SDGs co-facilitator.

The creation of a Listserv group per Cycle has brought together Bridge Alumni in their respective regions and is supporting in learning from each other and building lasting networks not only for advocates' individual growth, but growth of the movement.

Through this Listserv and continuous learning and engagement, Bridge CRPD-SDGs Alumni from the Asian region continue to share how the training impacted on their roles as disability activists with reports showing Alumni engaging in influencing of public policies, active participation in reporting to human rights mechanisms, provision of technical support in the writing of SDGs reports, supporting in the building capacities of DPOs and also strengthening of the cross disability movement among others.

To build on such successes of the Bridge CRPD SDGs in the Asian region, at a wider level, still significant efforts are required to increase these numbers of skilled DPO advocates and leaders to take action and continue challenging the status quo, and ensure further inclusion of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society in addition to the continued setting standards on CRPD and SDGs trainings, and ensuring consistency across the regions, with the principles and provisions of the CRPD as well as with the evolving jurisprudence of the CRPD Committee and key learning from the implementation of the CRPD and SDGs.

## Country-based situation

### Nepal<sup>1</sup>

Nepal is a small, landlocked and mountainous country located between India and China with a population of 26.4 million. The official census data of Nepal (2011) reports a 1.94% disability rate, however, a number of organisations suggest that the actual figure far higher. It is tedious to obtain accurate data on the prevalence of disability in Nepal due to stigma, a lack of understanding on how to define disability and other socio-economic factors. Cultural factors also play a role in this. Hinduism's rituals posit that privileges and deficits are earned in a past life. In other words, impairments are regarded as a result of prior sins of the person or their family. People often hide their disabilities due to a number of socio-cultural norms, values and pressures. Researchers, policy makers, planners, international and national organisations who are working in the Nepalese disability sector estimate that national disability figure is actually far higher on account of poverty, poor health and maternal care facilities, geographical variations, the 10-year Maoist conflict and the recent earthquake.<sup>2</sup>

Many children with mental and physical disabilities study in separate schools or classrooms and do not receive quality inclusive education because schools lack physical accessibility, teachers trained in inclusive education, accessible educational materials, and other supports. In 2017, Nepal adopted the Disability Rights Act and an Inclusive Education Policy, which calls for children with disabilities to study without discrimination in their communities.<sup>3</sup>

### Bangladesh

Bangladesh faces a huge challenge in ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities, who make up a significant proportion of the population, possibly up to 10%.<sup>4</sup> The 5<sup>th</sup> National Population and Housing Census conducted in 2011, indicated that persons with disabilities constituted only 1.4 % of the population. The total estimated population of Bangladesh is 152.52 million.

Several reports and research shows the challenges that persons with disabilities face in communities, including marginalization faced by women and girls with disabilities<sup>5</sup>. People with disability have less access to education and income generating activities compared to non-disabled people of the same age group, with suggestions that it is essential to create positive awareness towards people with disabilities, and enable access to education, employment and modern mobility and communication devices<sup>6</sup>.

### Sri Lanka

The census of population carried out by the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) in 2011 records 8.7% of the total population (21.44 million) as persons with disabilities but significant concerns remain regarding the definition and criteria for identifying and capturing all persons with all disabilities during the census.<sup>7</sup>

A survey conducted in 2013 showed that the total of disabled persons in Sri Lanka was at 10%.<sup>8</sup> Persons with disabilities have been consistently marginalized in the Sri Lankan polity due to the absence of a rights-based approach. They are denied opportunities to participate effectively in the public realm.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This information is attributed to a PhD research, "Moving Towards Inclusive Education: How Inclusive Education is Understood, Experienced and Enacted in Nepalese Primary schools" Mukti Prakash, 2016, [www.researchgate.net/publication/303756141\\_A\\_Report\\_on\\_Disability\\_in\\_Nepal](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/303756141_A_Report_on_Disability_in_Nepal)

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> [www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/nepal](http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/nepal)

<sup>4</sup> Current status of Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh: Legal and Grassroots Perspectives 2015; National Grassroots and Disabilities Organization (NGDO), National Council for Women with Disabilities (NCDW) Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)

<sup>5</sup> [www.independentliving.org/docs6/uddin200309.html](http://www.independentliving.org/docs6/uddin200309.html)

<sup>6</sup> <http://203.112.218.65:8008/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/PopMonographs/disabilityFinal.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> UN Universal Periodic Review -Sri Lanka 2017 Third Cycle, 28thSession 2017: Submission for the Review of the Situation of Persons with Disabilities in Sri Lanka by Disability Organizations Joint Front

## Pakistan

According to the 1998 census, there are 3,286,630 people with disability constituting 2.54 per cent of the population (Bureau of Statistics, 1998).<sup>10</sup> In Pakistan, estimates of the number of persons with disabilities vary between 3.3m and 27m, depending on whether they are based on government statistics (the last census which measured the prevalence rates was taken in 1998) or whether they come from other agencies.<sup>11</sup>

Persons with disabilities still have difficulty exercising their civil and political rights, attending quality schools and finding gainful employment, among other activities. This ultimately means that they are being excluded as productive members of society, leading to economic losses.<sup>12</sup>

## Laos

The Lao PDR is a small, landlocked country in South East Asia, bordered by China to the north, Vietnam and Cambodia to the east, Thailand to the south and Myanmar to the west. The estimated population was 6.7m in 2014. Over the decade 2006 -2016, the Lao PDR experienced rapid economic growth, averaging 7% per annum, and is now classified by The World Bank as a lower-middle income country.

Despite this, an estimated 23% of the population continues to live in poverty. The majority of the population live in rural areas, around 80% as subsistence farmers.<sup>13</sup> A 2005 Population and Housing Census estimated prevalence of only 1.3% of persons with disabilities - but relied on self-identification of disability and did not specifically seek information about mental health.<sup>14</sup> There is a lack of accurate statistics on disability prevalence and types of disability in the Lao PDR. More information would better inform government policies and actions by development partners to address disability.<sup>15</sup>

## Task Team

Bridge CRPD-SDGs Asian multi-countries English cycle (Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and Laos)

- IDA (along with its members)
- IDDC (CBM, DPOD and HI. Others tbc)
- TCI Asia-Pacific

## Language

The training will be held in English.

## Participants

The Bridge CRPD-SDGs Asian multi-countries English cycle (Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and Laos) would **accommodate 30 participants**, in a total maximum of 70 people including captioners, illustrators, interpreters, sign language interpreters, personal assistants, observers and logistical support.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.newsfirst.lk/2014/02/24/disabled-persons-sri-lanka-will-increase-upto-24-2-2040/](http://www.newsfirst.lk/2014/02/24/disabled-persons-sri-lanka-will-increase-upto-24-2-2040/)

<sup>9</sup> ibid

<sup>10</sup> [www.ukessays.com/essays/social-work/situation-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-pakistan-social-work-essay.php](http://www.ukessays.com/essays/social-work/situation-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-pakistan-social-work-essay.php)

<sup>11</sup> Moving from the margins Mainstreaming persons with disabilities in Pakistan A custom research report produced for the British Council August 2014 [www.britishcouncil.pk/sites/default/files/moving\\_from\\_the\\_margins\\_final.pdf](http://www.britishcouncil.pk/sites/default/files/moving_from_the_margins_final.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> ibid

<sup>13</sup> <http://ldpa.org.la/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Factsheet-3-Disability-in-Lao-PDR.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> ibid

<sup>15</sup> ibid

## Timeframe and place

Module 1 would take place in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Module 2 would have to be defined.

- 28 November to 5 December 2019 - Bridge Module 1
- January - June 2020 - Six months for preparation of assignment is needed in between the modules
- July or August 2020 - Module 2 (place tbc)

## Fundraising strategy

- The Task Team members would jointly and individually fundraise for both the first and the second Module of the Bridge CRPD-SDGs Asian multi-countries English cycle (Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and Laos) in their capacity of members of the Task Team,

This Concept Note will support the fundraising process and a Partnership Protocol will be signed by all supporter organisations as soon the roles of each organization will be clarified and not later than October 2019.

## Curriculum

In summary:

- **Module 1** focuses on the development of knowledge and skills to understand the CRPD and helps participants to start analysing development from a CRPD perspective, with emphasis on inclusion and intersectionality.
- **Module 2** builds on this understanding and develops skills on how to apply the CRPD to key development and policy areas from legal harmonisation, budgetary advocacy, inclusive programming and disaggregated data, with the purpose of creating the evidence for policy change.
- **High-level political exchange** - Module 2 also provides participants with practical opportunity to apply learnings by engaging with senior representatives from government, donors or UN agencies, among others. Such meetings are also great opportunities to raise awareness of those officials.

**Assignment** - Between Module 1 and 2 participants have a double assignment to:

(1) work with peers at country level to jointly analyse from a cross disability perspective the human rights and development context in their country, including public policy and legal frameworks to be ready to share with peers in module 2, as well as

(2) to develop on an individual basis, a draft policy brief analysing a development issue in their own country from a CRPD perspective. The policy paper should be finalized just after Module 2 to receive the certificate.

## Preparatory training

Before this Bridge cycle, a 3 or 4 days' preparatory workshop for underrepresented groups shall be conducted, in particular for deaf and deafblind participants, based on previous feedback from these groups. The focus is to prepare the participants, their interpreters and support persons on specific terminology and concepts around the Bridge curriculum, so, they can meaningfully participate during the Bridge cycle.

Detailed information on Bridge CRPD SDGs is available at

[www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/bridge-capacity-building](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/bridge-capacity-building)