

Terms of Reference

Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for Sustainable Development: Thematic Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Action

I. Background

1. Established under the scope of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (“Sendai Framework”) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2015. The Sendai Framework provides a comprehensive approach to disaster risk reduction by taking a proactive shift from managing disasters to managing risk and promoting the implementation of policies that reduce existing risk, prevent the creation of new risk and build resilience¹.

2. Although persons with disabilities are currently recognized in the preamble to the *Paris Agreement* as one of the groups that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, they have been largely invisible to policymakers, experts, and activists in the field of climate change.² Despite the clear obligations of states to consult persons with disabilities in policy-making and to promote their rights internationally under the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD) and the principle of public participation enshrined in the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC), persons with disabilities do not currently have a constituency that enables them to participate in the negotiations held under the UNFCCC. As a consequence, persons with disabilities have received little attention from states in the UNFCCC. They are only incidentally included in a list of vulnerable groups and have not been the focus of specific initiatives to respect and fulfil their rights, such as those that have been created for other constituencies under the UNFCCC, such as the creation of the Indigenous Peoples Platform or the adoption of a Gender Action Plan. As the world moves forward with measures to tackle the climate crisis and adapt to the impacts of climate change, it is critical that these efforts include persons with disabilities, integrate respect for their human rights, and empower them as agents of change.

3. The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for Sustainable Development (“Stakeholder Group”) was established in 2017 under the UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism. The Stakeholder Group is the focal point for the UN Secretariat, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and UNGA with regard to the full inclusion and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the national and global monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda³, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD)⁴.

4. According to its Terms of Reference, the stakeholders group can establish external working groups (thematic groups). External Working Groups - coordinated by Stakeholders Group Focal Points, represented by the Permanent and Alternate Representatives - will participate in UN meetings and events, liaise with respective UN agencies, and coordinate inputs into policy positions and statements. The working group on disaster risk reduction and Climate Action (the

¹ UNISDR Stakeholder Advisory Group paper (p2)

² Paris Agreement available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

³ SGPWD Terms of Reference available at

http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/sgpwd_tor_1_march_2017_final.pdf

⁴ United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>

TG-DRRCA) is being established as one of the external working groups under the stakeholders group aiming to enhance the opportunity for persons with disabilities, their representative organizations, and non-governmental and other organizations working on the rights of persons with disabilities to advocate with a unified voice for their inclusion in all disaster risk reduction and climate action related processes. The present document provides guidance for group members on how to be involved and also seeks to guarantee the sustainability of the active participation and inclusion of members, strengthening their role and collaboration.

II. Objectives of the Thematic Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Action

5. Under the auspices of the Stakeholder Group, the Thematic Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Action TG-(DRRCA) will contribute to the monitoring and implementation of the Sendai Framework to ensure the full inclusion and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, in line with the UN CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals.

6. The TG-DRRCA will participate in the UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM) Advisory Group and any other related mechanism to represent the voice and experiences of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations ensuring their full inclusion and meaningful participation in the promotion, implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework, in line with the UN CRPD. The group may decide to request official affiliation with the UNDRR SEM advisory group, and will seek to be the UNDRR-recognised 'focal point' in this group representing the global disability community. The group may also engage with the Reference Group on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action to contribute in relevant aspects of the implementation of the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

7. Regarding disability-inclusive climate action, This working group would have four principal purposes:

- Develop a global network of DPOs in the field of climate change;
- Build bridges between the fields of disability and climate change;
- Facilitate the meaningful participation of DPOs in multilateral and domestic climate policy processes; and
- Foster collaborative advocacy to ensure that the human rights of persons with disabilities are effectively included in the climate justice movement and in the adoption and implementation of climate policies and programs.

8. The purpose of this group is to create an open, inclusive and accessible platform for members to coordinate and join efforts, unify voices and messages, and exchange knowledge and information. Members contribution in the group is based on their dedication to disability-inclusive DRR and climate action, and the group does not have a dedicated budget. However, in case a workplan is adopted, the group may decide to seek resources necessary for its implementation.

III. Principles

9. The Thematic Group on DRR will adhere to the principles and Articles contained in the UN CRPD, with particular consideration of Article 11 "Situations of Risk and Humanitarian Emergencies", the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically goals 11 and 13, Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

10. The TG-DRR will respect the guiding values and principles of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, defined in the Stakeholder Group Terms of Reference.

11. The TG-DRR will ensure the inclusion and full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in all aspects of its work, in line with UN CRPD Article 4.3.

12. The TG-DRR is committed to take all necessary measures to ensure inclusion and participation of under-represented groups of persons with disabilities in its membership, plans and activities. Under-represented groups may include women with disabilities, deaf or hard of hearing persons, persons with deafblindness, intellectual, or psychosocial disabilities, LGBTQI persons with disabilities, indigenous persons with disabilities, and refugees and internally displaced persons with disabilities.

IV. Membership

13. The TG-DRRCA is a coordination mechanism open to all persons with disabilities, organizations of persons with disabilities, non-governmental, humanitarian and other civil society organizations working on the rights of persons with disabilities and non-governmental donors and experts working on inclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction and climate action.

14. All members must register through the SGPWD-Thematic Group on DRR registration form⁵.

V. Methods of Work

15. The TG-DRRCA is composed of the following mechanisms:

- One main and one alternate global focal point who will be nominated for a period of two years through an open and transparent nomination and voting system.
- one main and one alternate focal point from each of the following regions for a period of two years, who will be elected by the TG-DRR members from the region through an open and transparent nomination and voting system: Africa, North America, Latin America, Arab States, Asia, ASEAN region, Europe, and the Pacific.
- The representative of the International Disability Alliance as the organizing partner of the TG-DRR;
- Steering Committee with the following membership:

the global and regional focal points, representative of the Stakeholders Group, and the representative of the International Disability Alliance as the organizing partner.

The focal points and Steering Committee members are committed to dedicating the time required to fulfill the undertaken roles, and are responsible to make the necessary coordination with their respective organizations.

16. The global focal points and the alternate will be responsible for the following, as required:

- a) Representing the TG-DRRCA in the UNDRR Stakeholder Advisory Group (upon fulfilment of paragraph 6 above) and providing information received from UNDRR and other relevant stakeholders to the Steering Committee and the TG-DRRCA;
- b) Identify and flag any opportunity requiring group action to the Steering Committee and the TG-DRRCA;
- c) Share knowledge and expertise to improve the documents produced or revised by the TG-DRRCA and offer leadership to group activities.

17. The regional focal points and alternates will be responsible for the following, as required:

⁵ Access via:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfpGjaReTUsDD0qGdWZDI3LlCLPW91iatDN0MY1_pHrriiBPw/vie/wform

- a) Supporting the participation and engagement of persons with disabilities in the lead up to and during relevant Regional Platforms for DRR or climate action and other regional DRR/Climate Action related meetings
- b) Informing the Steering Committee and the TG-DRRCA of regional developments and coordinating messaging and information
- c) Coordinating and disseminating key messaging and establishing common positions in line with the CRPD in their respective regions.

18. The Steering Committee will be responsible for coordinating the TG-DRRCA to provide inputs on the promotion, implementation and monitoring—including of voluntary stakeholder commitments—on the Sendai Framework and UNFCCC through the following activities, as required:

- a) Ensure coordination and collaboration among the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, global and regional focal points and the organizing partner to ensure coherent messaging between the SGPWD and the TG-DRRCA at global and regional levels
- b) Identify knowledgeable and committed persons with disabilities and support their preparation and participation in the lead up to and during the Global Platform for DRR, held biannually, the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP), as well as other global events on disaster risk reduction or climate action.
- c) Coordinating and disseminating key messaging and establishing common positions to ensure disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and climate action in line with the CRPD and other relevant legal frameworks.

19. The International Disability Alliance as the organizing partner will be responsible for the following:

- a) Provide technical and communication support for the meetings of the Steering Committee, the TG-DRRCA and other internal or external meetings as required;
- b) Dedicating a web-page on the International Disability Alliance website to provide updated information about the group activity;
- c) Provide technical support to persons with disabilities selected by the Steering Committee to represent the group at global and regional DRR and climate action events;

20. The criteria and process for electing global and regional focal points will be adopted by the group in a separate document. In the regions where regional representative organizations of persons with disabilities exist, the respective regional focal points will be selected in coordination with such organization.

VI. Communication and Coordination

21. The primary method of communication will be through the online Google Groups forum, via the email address tg-drr@googlegroups.com. All registered members of the Thematic Group on DRR will have access to this group.

22. All information pertaining to and developed by the TG-DRRCA will be hosted on the International Disability Alliance website: <http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sgpwd-drr>

23. The Steering Committee will meet on a monthly basis. Any of the TG-DRRCA members may request emergency meeting of the Steering Committee to discuss an urgent matter including a outset of a disaster.

24. The TG-DRRCA members will meet at least 3 times a year to discuss group priorities and strategy. These meetings may take place online or in person based on the circumstances. Any of the members may request the Steering committee to call for an ad hoc meeting to discuss any urgent subject. The Steering Committee may decide to establish time-bound working groups to fulfill certain tasks if required.

25. A membership list will be available on the TG-DRR web-page for members of the Thematic Group to support coordination. All documents developed by the Thematic Group on DRR will be provided in accessible electronic formats. Reasonable accommodation will be provided for in person and online meetings as required.

26. This Terms of Reference enters into force on July 24, 2020.