

Final Report

NEAT Working Group on

Mainstreaming Disability in East Asia Economic Community: Breaking Barriers and Creating Inclusive Society Through Mutual Collaboration.”

Organized by

Ratchasuda College, Mahidol University, Thailand.

Supported by

Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand.

At Mercure Bangkok Makkasan Hotel,

Bangkok, Thailand

August 16, 2018

I. Rationale

The Network of East Asian Think-tanks (NEAT) is a Track 2 international organization of ASEAN plus 3 countries (Japan, China and ROK) or The ASEAN Plus Three (APT). The network serves as a regional mechanism, aiming to promote the academic exchanges and provide intellectual support for East Asian cooperation and development. In addition, it facilitates collaboration between the government and academic sectors, particularly on key and sensitive agendas in the region, for instance maritime transportation, irregular migration, and East Asian community (EAc) development.

According to “Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in ASEAN Community” and “Concept Paper on ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2011-2020): the Thematic Years to Promote Disability Inclusive Development in ASEAN”, the declaration and concept paper encourage ASEAN member state (AMS) to act on mobilizing the plan of action of the ASEAN Decade for Persons with Disabilities and emphasize that disability is a cross-cutting issue embedded within all three ASEAN Communities with the ultimate goal of ASEAN to mainstream disability perspectives in this region. Furthermore, the recent East Asia Vision Group (EAVG) II Report: Realising an East Asia Economic Community by 2020, also states 4 recommendations including 1) single-market and production base, 2) financial stability, food and energy security, 3) equitable and sustainable development and 4) constructive contribution to the global economy. Thus, promotion for collaboration of AMS implementing disability related projects at regional level is the key success to address this particular action plan.

These goals also correspond to global approach – the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) with mainstreaming livelihood of PWDs in “Article 27 Work and Employment” that States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation.

Ratchasuda College, Mahidol University is higher education and academic institution regarding disability studies and rehabilitation services since 1993 that now aims to be a center

of education and research on disability in the Asia-Pacific through international network cooperation, educational orientation and academic services under the philosophy of economic sufficiency. Ratchasuda College has served to quality of life development for persons with disabilities (PWDs) more than two decades through various strategies and missions; forge quality of knowledge on disability and develop ethical academic students, establish universal research on disability, contribute to academic services development, create the collaboration amongst the organizations for the disabled and with concerned agencies, either national or international, break barriers of social discrimination towards disability, develop the administration system concerning good governance strategies, local knowledge and Thai life-style within the framework of economic sufficiency. Thus, based on the ultimate goal of The Network of East Asian Think-tanks (NEAT) to promote quality of life and mainstream for persons with disabilities in East Asia Economic community, Ratchasuda College, Mahidol University can serve to address such ultimate goal through particular objectives, methodologies and approaches in this concept paper.

II. Background

There are more than 1,000 million persons with disabilities globally, that is about 15% of the world's population, while 690 million men, women and children in Asia and the Pacific have some form of disability. The number is expected to rise over the next decades due to population ageing, natural disasters, chronic health conditions, road traffic injuries, poor working conditions and other factors. Focusing on countries in ASEAN+3 countries (Japan, China and ROK), most of such countries have had smart laws and policies to promote quality of life of PWDs for their own countries. Surprisingly, in reality, there are many challenges and barriers for inclusive living of PWDs through their various aspects of life including health, education, employment, economic, social and political participation.

There are widespread evidences of barriers, including inadequate policies and standards, negative attitudes, lack of provision of services, funding, accessibility, consultation and involvement, data and evidence. As general perspective, these challenges and barriers might be addressed by enabling access to all mainstream systems and services, investing in specific programmes and services for persons with disabilities, adopting a national disability strategy and plan of action, improving human resource capacity, increasing public awareness and

understanding, improving disability data collection, strengthening and supporting research on disability.

However, the critical challenges on inclusive living of PWDs usually have rooted from stigmatization and negative attitudes of society. Negative attitudes of stakeholders towards PWDs are also complexity and not only based on disability, but have been related to race, knowledge, information and cultural context as well. Some studies found that employers and organizations that receive race charges were more likely to receive disability charges, it implies that individuals who have negative attitudes towards marginalized group, tend to be the same perspective whatever they are. The studies suggest that solution to achieve these phenomena is to be more exploration, sharing and research for improving stakeholders participation and quantifying such national legal and policy contributions.

Thus, mutual sharing and collaborative platform among stakeholders of The ASEAN Plus Three (APT) will be provided to address “mainstreaming disability or inclusive living of PWDs” that PWDs can access all effective and sufficient living including health services, educational provisions, social and political, employment and economic participation based on human dignity, equality, rights and without discrimination. Particularly, the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment of PWDs is important and will also address missions of NEAT, APT, Bali Declaration, Concept Paper on ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities and current East Asia Vision Group (EAVG) II Report: Realising an East Asia Economic Community by 2020 with 4 recommendations mentioned earlier.

III. Objectives

The NEAT Working Group has the following objectives:

- a) To develop a regional action plan on ASEAN Plus Three regarding mainstreaming disability.
- b) To provide platform for members and stakeholders to share knowledge and experiences on interventions and measures to address mainstreaming disability.
- c) To identify areas for and conduct joint research and development studies on mainstreaming disability, building on existing interventions, adding value to the national and regional response.

- d) To advocate for the need of increased resources requires to implement effective mainstreaming disability.

IV. Methodologies and approaches.

- a) Literature review and exploration on past and recent situations of quality of life, challenges, proposed solutions for inclusive living of PWDs.
- b) Formation of a regional taskforce for mainstreaming disability action plan development.
- c) Jointly advocate for the need of policy development and program support among relevant sectors to address mainstreaming disability.
- d) Develop and advocate for agreements among member countries to support and provide resources and assistances to countries where the program is weak.

V. Expected Outputs and Outcomes

- a) A mutual action plan or guideline for mainstreaming disability to break barriers and create inclusive society for PWDs.
- b) Policy notes/reports to be shared by high level policy makers and administrators in member countries.

VI. Tentative Program



PROGRAM

**NEAT Working Group Meeting 2018:
“Mainstreaming Disability in East Asia Economic Community: Breaking Barriers and
Creating Inclusive Society Through Mutual Collaboration.”
15 - 17 August 2018
at Mercure Bangkok Makkasan Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand**

Wednesday, August 15, 2018:

A.M./P.M. : Arrival of participants

Thursday, August 16, 2018:

08.30 - 09.00 a.m. : Registration
Venue: Meeting Room Makkasan II&III (the 7th floor)

09.00 - 09.15 a.m. : Opening address
By Suriya Chindawongse, Ph.D.
Director-General, Department of Asean Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

9.15 – 9.30 a.m. : Welcome address
By Assoc. Prof. Nopraenue Sajjarax Dhirathiti, Ph.D.
Vice President for International Relations and
Corporate Communication of Mahidol University

09.30 – 10.00 a.m. : Keynote address
By Seree Nonthasoot, Ph.D.
Institute of Research and Development for Public
Enterprises and Representative of Thailand to the
ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human
Rights

- 10.00 – 10.10 a.m. : Token of appreciation and group photo
- 10.10 – 10.25 a.m. : Refreshment/ coffee break
- 10.25 a.m. – 12.00 p.m. : NEAT Working Group Meeting**
- 10.25 - 10.45 a.m. : Welcome address by session chair
and self- introduction by participants
- 10.45 – 11.00 am. : Past and recent mainstream disability in East Asia:
Positive aspects and challenges through brief literature
review
By Tavee Cheausuwantavee, Assoc.Prof. Ph.D.
Director of Ph.D. program in Quality of Life
Development for PWDs,
Ratchasuda College, Mahidol University
- 11.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m. : NEAT Working Group Presentation: Current and proposed
Mainstream disability
Session chair by Tavee Cheausuwantavee, Assoc.
Prof.
Ph.D., NEAT Thailand
- Presentations by representatives from NEAT APT in
alphabetical order (20 minutes: 15 minutes for
presentation, 5 minutes for Q&A)**
- 11.00 – 11.20 a.m. : NEAT Cambodia
- 11.20 – 11.40 a.m. : NEAT China
- 11.40 - 12.00 p.m. : Q&A & sharing by invited and all participants
- 12.00 – 1.30 p.m. : Lunch at the Station Restaurant (the 8th floor)**
- 1.30 – 4.00 p.m. : NEAT Working Group presentation (cont.)
- Presentations by representatives from NEAT APT in
Alphabetical order (20 minutes: 15 minutes for
presentation, 5 minutes for Q&A)**
- 1.30 – 1.50 p.m. : NEAT Japan
- 1.50 – 2.10 p.m. : NEAT Lao PDR
- 2.10 – 2.30 p.m. : NEAT Myanmar
- 2.30 – 2.45 p.m. : Q&A & sharing by invited and all participants

2.45 – 3.00 p.m.	:	Refreshment
3.00 – 3.20 p.m.	:	NEAT Singapore
3.20 – 3.40 p.m.	:	NEAT Thailand
3.40 – 3.50 p.m.	:	Q&A & sharing by invited and all participants
3.50 – 4.00 p.m.	:	Wrap up session By Sunanta Klibthong, Ph.D., Secretariat of NEAT working group meeting Tavee Cheausuwantavee, Assoc.Prof. Ph.D. Session Chair of NEAT working group meeting Ratchasuda College, Mahidol University.
4.00 – 4.10 p.m.	:	Closing remarks By Dr. Wachara Riewpaiboon, M.D., MSc. Dean of Ratchasuda College, Mahidol University
5.00 - 8.00 p.m.	:	Dinner hosted by Mahidol University Venue: The Pool Bar (10 th floor)

Friday, August 17, 2018:

A.M./P.M. : Departure of participants

Note: 1. Each presentation will cover the country’s perspective and policy recommendations including

- 1.1. General info regarding PWDs in each country
- 1.2. Problems / challenges
- 1.3. Mainstreaming disability notes/recommendations for ASEAN PLUS THREE (APT) governments

The policy recommendations should be based on 1) Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in ASEAN Community” and “Concept Paper on ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities 2011-2020, 2) Incheon Strategy, 3) East Asia Vision Group: EAVG II Report, 4) Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD 2007).

2. Each NEAT representative should submit documents of policy recommendations (no.1) as full-paper or PowerPoint presentation to the organizer via email: tavee126@hotmail.com, chalita.rai@mahidol.edu by August 13th, 2018.

3. Each representative has 20 minutes with 15 minutes for presentation and 5 minutes for discussions/ Q&A.

VII. Presentations and Discussions in the Working Group Meeting

Representative of NEAT from seven countries-Cambodia, China, Japan, Laos, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand respectively, were finally beginning to take the issues of the extent, causes and implications of disability, quality of care and vulnerable people in society such as the aged seriously. This report summarizes each country's focused presentation, policy direction and key issues emerging from the presentations. The report finally draws out some important recommendations for moving forward.

1. Cambodia

Cambodia presented many topical issues on the current policy and practice framework regarding Persons with disabilities (PWDs). While Cambodia has ratified the UNCRPD on December 20, 2012 its implementation of CRPD only began on January 19, 2013 and the Law of the Protection and the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by the National Assembly on May 29, 2009 and officially signed by His Majesty the King Samdech Preah Baromneath Norodom Sihamoni on July 3, 2009. In addition Cambodia has developed a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) - the National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010 with updated version 2009-2013 and 2014-2018 (NSDP) in collaboration with NGOs, CDPO and DPOs. It details that implementation of the national policy on disability is through the Disability Action Council with the focus on strengthening the implementation of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to enhance the rights and welfare of the disabled according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as improving the quality and efficiency of the disability fund's services.

The presentation details that MoSVY has launched the strategic plan with 3 strategic goals and 8 priority programs in alignment with: (1). The 5th Government political platform (2).Rectangular Strategy Phase III (3). National Development Strategic Plan 2014-2018, (4). Millennium development goals and (5).Strategies for social protection of the poor and the vulnerable 2011-2015. Also put into action are twin programs (i) Mainstreaming - Action and Outputs involving (Ministry of Social Affairs, Veteran and Youth Rehabilitation Welfares for Persons with Disabilities Department, Disability Right Administration, Disability Action Council (DAC), Provincial DAC, Ministerial DAC Working Group, Persons with Disabilities Foundation, CDPO, NGOs, DPOs, Development Partners, Private Sectors, and (ii) Sensitization of general development actors on inclusion of disability (inclusive committee, DAC, donors, Government), Education Strategic Plan (2005), Child friendly School policy (2007), Education For All Plan (2002), Constitution (equal rights for all) (1993/9), NGO statement on NSDP monitoring (2008), inclusion of disability, General Declaration on the Human Rights ('49), Inclusive Commune Development Plans (2007) and National Disability Strategy Plan (2014).

To this end Cambodia launched specific empowerment initiatives and action outputs to remove barriers to PWDs. These include for example, support to empower CDPO and ABC (DPOs local and national level), Law for the Protection and the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2009), Policy on Education for Children with Disabilities (2008), National Action Plan on Disability and Mine victims (2009), NGO statement on disability (2008), UNCRPD on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2012), National Social Protection Policy Framework (2016-2025) and Action Plan to promote a family friendly setting for children with disabilities without parental care (2017). Finally, there is a strong disability movement in Cambodia that ensured National Accessibility Guidelines have been developed and finalized for

implementation, National PT standard have been developed and finalized for implementation. The presentation details that since 2013 Cambodia has provided rehabilitation services for 318,306 PWDs (187,609 persons received medical rehabilitation services, 130,697 received the physical rehabilitation services including transport and meals fee support for free. For community-based rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities, 1966 self-help groups (SHGs) have formed, including 74 SHGs have registered to be DPOs. Also, 7 radio stations (for the Voice of PWDs) were run by CDPO, Blind Association, and DPOs, Sign language and braille provided for public schools and media outlets, Promote arts and sports among persons with disabilities. As a result, persons with disabilities received 178 medals, and of these gold 30 medals, silver 90 and bronzes 58 medals, according to the Para Olympics and special Olympics, Provided the vocational training for 16,931 persons with disabilities, and they are self-employed and employed, The government recruited 2,576 PWDs to work for the government institutions, For Social Assistance, Disability Allowance provided by the government, and the allowance is currently in 12 provinces. All persons with disabilities can ask for assistance from the Polling Station Commission officials to cast their vote on Election Day, and they are encouraged to be an election observer.

2. China

China has moved from humanitarianism to real social policy to support PWDs. China is also using a rights-based approach for programing for PWDs that is consistent with UN charter on disability. China's Constitution and dozens of relevant laws clearly define the special protection of the rights and interests of the disabled. China promulgated the Law on the Protection of the Disabled Persons in 1990, implemented it in 1991 and revised it in 2008. The revised Law on the Protection of the Disabled Persons puts forward the concept of

"discrimination based on disability" and highlights the concept of "rights-based". PWDs form a core component of China's poverty reduction strategy in line with their constitution. Over the past five years, more than 4.4 million impoverished rural disabled people were lifted out of poverty. China is also creating barrier-free urban and rural environment to include PWDs function to their maximum. The challenges exist as to how to reach all PWDs and adequately provide for their needs.

3. Japan

Japan presented cash benefit analysis on OECD countries of which she is a member. Japan uses 0.6% of her GDP to service persons with disability. In terms of income for PWDs, nearly 50 percent gain less than JPY 1 million a year. (GDP per capita: 3.5 million) and public benefits include about 2 millions of PWD Japanese who receive cash benefits. Out of them, 1.5 millions receive the minimum. 1.8 millions are over 65 years old, which corresponds to 1.42% of the entire Japanese population. The number has become nearly doubled for the past 2 decades and aging population has become the major reason for the increase in the handicapped with the total public expenditure for the handicapped amounting to JPY 200 billion (2.2 percent of the budget), 1.4 times bigger for the 2 decades. (4.5 trillion for pension).

Japan is has a plan for 2050, taking into consideration the increase in PWDs as a result of aging. This proactive planning is to mitigate a net burden on the Japanese society and to ensure all elderly people including the handicapped enjoy a quality of life.

4. Lao PDR

Lao PDR opened presentation with a summary of the country profile as the least developed in the block of nations. In addition the country is bedeviled with unexploded mines of war which have contributed to many injuries resulting in physical disabilities. The reports indicated that since 1964, more than 50,500 victims have been killed by mine explosions and international Communities, Organizations and National NGOs have been instrumental in helping victims of mines and explosive remnants of war in Laos since 1983. Lao now expanded services to include child disability prevention and early detection, road accident prevention, support for disabled person organizations, and social and economic integration for people with disabilities. Based on 2015 statistics 2.8% of the total population have disabilities of which 1.9% mild, 0.6% moderate and 0.3% severe functional limitations (Lao Statistics Bureau, 2016) with causes ranging from congenital, infectious diseases, war and/or unexploded ordnance (UXO) and accidents.

The most important missing point is the lack of contextual definition for disability. There are currently policies and programs to address the needs of PWDs including Prime Minister' Decree No. 138/1995, Compulsory Education Act, And Decree No. 18/1995, on Appointing the National Commission for Disabled Persons, National Committee for Disabled Persons (NCDP), Decree on Social Security Scheme for Corporate Employees, 2000 that addresses International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, 1958, (No. 111), the ILO Convention on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disable Persons), 1983 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and Optional Protocol. Ironically Lao has learnt a lot from the ASEAN

community and regional bodies and is making gain in her disability policy and support for PWDs.

5. Myanmar

In Myanmar, it was noted that 4.6% of the population are PWDs with the majority living in rural areas. Out of this 36 % of PWDS have physical disabilities and 11.2% of households have PWDs. One key element noted in the presentation was how disability increases with age. Ironically PWDs are the least to own property. Policies and programs to service persons with disability include: 1958 – Disability Employment Act; 2011 – the Bali Declaration (Nov 2011); 2011 – Ratified UNCRPD (Dec 2011); 2012 – Committed to Asia Pacific Decade of the PWDs, 2013- 2020, and the Incheon Strategy to “make the right real”; 2015 – Law of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; 2017 – Bylaw for Myanmar Law of the rights of PWDs. Although the National Disability Employment Act was enacted in 1958, it was intended only for rehabilitation of soldiers with disabilities and did not cover other PWDs. Myanmar ratified UNCRPD on 7th Dec 2011 and Government submitted the initial Report on UNCRPD to UNCRPD Committee on 17th November 2015 with report reflecting the state of implementation of UNCRPD report 2017.

Access to, and completing education is very low for PDWs however, Myanmar is making progress on the policy front including: the 2014 – Myanmar Council of Persons with Disabilities (MCPD); 2015 – Myanmar Law of the rights of PWDs; 2016 – Myanmar Federation of Persons with Disabilities (MFPD); 2017 – Bylaw for the Myanmar Law of the Rights of PWDs; and 2018 – National Committee for Disability. Other achievements include Union Civil Service Board committed not to discriminate PWDs in recruitment of civil servants; Ministry of Education

remove the policies and practices which discriminate the students with disabilities to attend the Teacher Training College; Ministry of Information committed to provide sign language interpretation in government TV channels; and Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement established a new department named Department of Rehabilitation and it is mainly responsible to implement for the rights of PWDs. These are not without challenges such as expertise and funding.

6. Singapore

Singapore presented topical issues on Smart cities and the community stakeholders and argues that smart cities utilize inclusive approach to policy making and service delivery that includes persons with disabilities. One of the focal point was technology integration into smart cities that benefit all people including the elderly. The presentation indicated that the purpose of smart technologies integration is to help the handicapped and disabled navigate around the city which may also be usable by other vulnerable groups including children. This inclusive policy-informed smart cities are consistent with UNDP program goals on building smart cities and societies.

In addition, the presentation outlined the interdisciplinary of disability and other social sectors by acknowledging that in taking care of a large population of disabled in any urban environment, disabled needs are often closely intertwined with public health, health policies and health care in general. Medical facilities in smart cities tend to practice smart healthcare with multiple avenues of interactions between patients, medical practitioners, medical organizations and equipment for the informatization of health records, platforms for accessing those records and cutting-edge technologies. Singapore is quite advance in their support for persons with

disabilities and the elderly using a variety of assistive technology devices. For example, Singapore's official Govtech website approaches smart nation digital and IoT (Internet of Things) projects with all-inclusiveness, including the disabled and physically challenged, using basic technologies like touch screen smartphones for the visually handicapped to cutting edge technologies. Singapore's non-profit organizations (NPOs) are also active in such ventures. The Specialized Assistive Technology Centre (Specialized ATC) established and managed by SPD (voluntary welfare organization or VWO) uses Assistive Technologies to empower handicapped and disabled individuals. Other technology devices in use included augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) methods), advanced eye tracking technology camera monitors which are being deployed in schools and hospitals. In a nut shell the integration of assistive technologies into smart cities is the driving factor for Singapore as it facilitates the inclusion of all people into society.

7. Thailand

Thailand presented on key issues regarding Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and how the country is working within international laws and guidelines to provide inclusive living and quality of life for PWDs. In line with international policies, Thailand developed disability-related provisions under the "Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2018" which prohibits unfair discrimination on grounds of disability. There are also disability-specific laws and related acts: The Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act 2007; The Education Act for Persons with Disabilities 2008, The 12th National Plan of Economic and Social Development 2017-2021 (B.E. 2560 – 2564). The 5th National Plan on Quality of Life Development of Persons with Disabilities 2017-2021 (B.E. 2560 – 2564); Vocation Training Promotion Act, 1996 and Social Security Act, 1999 among others. The main ministry responsible for people with disabilities is

the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. It works in collaboration with the following ministries: Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society.

This interagency collaboration has led to many positive results of legislative approach and policy implementation through the past decade after the Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act 2007 was passed. Quality of life (QoL) of PWDs and the majority of legal essences have been harmonious with each other, uphold CRPD and promoted human dignity and equal rights of PWDs without discrimination. Community-based rehabilitation (CBR) projects, community volunteers, and assistive technologies for independent living as well as enjoy legal capacity on equal basis.

Positive results of the current law enforcement was mentioned in the fields of: (i) Health: Increasing development of useful techniques and skills in medical rehabilitation for PWDs among researchers/master degree students; (ii) Education: Increasing schools and various educational approaches for PWDs, development of useful techniques and skills in educational provisions for PWDs among researchers/master degree students, development of useful techniques and skills in educational supports for PWDs among researchers/master degree students; (iii) Vocation and employment: Increasing employment rate of PWDs and positive attitude between employers and PWDs, development of job training curriculum for PWDs to meet labour market; (iv) Social inclusion and participation: Increasing positive attitudes and relationship between PWDs and their employers , increasing DPOs, networks and Independent Living (IL) centers , positive participation in religion based on dignity and ability of PWDs.

8. **Policy Recommendations**

Recommendations for ASEAN Plus Three collaboration: The way forward for NEAT

A critical analysis of all the presentations highlight five important things that need further attention and deliberations to help achieve the goals of NEAT.

- It can be recognized that from your presentations and discussions all the countries in the ASEAN region as well as other countries that participated in this working group have developed disability policies as the first step toward developing and providing services for PWDs. This is to ensure that everyone, particularly those with disabilities and the aged are supported to fully participate and benefit from the social, political and economic activities of your various countries. This is an important step because policy is the first approach towards ensuring every child, every student and every person with disability or the aged has access to full participation in the social, cultural and economic activities of their various countries. Policies are important and the presentations have demonstrated that through effective policies the quality of life of persons with disability and the aged can be enhanced.
- The policies discussed are consistent with the international and regional frameworks for PWDs including CRPD, Bali Declaration, Incheon Strategy, East Asia Vision Group Report. These frameworks main goal for persons with disabilities (PWDs) is to enable them access and equal participation in all activities in their respective countries that lead to quality of life. United Nation urges every country to develop pragmatic policies that can lead to effective practices and programs. Policies need inclusive orientation to embrace every individual within their respective societies. Current policies demonstrate

consistency with international and regional frameworks but there are not more to move quality of life development for PWDs.

- Effective strategies also indicate collaboration with government and civil society including NGOs that extend a lot of goodwill towards persons with disabilities. This goodwill is translated through what was discussed, particularly the various outlines and strategic goals, the creation of smart cities and the integration of assistive technologies to support persons with disability. Free of charge education and transportation in urban areas in some countries and barrier-free environments in urban and rural areas which are geared toward enhancing the quality of life of persons with disabilities and cash payments to PWDs and the aged in some countries are commendable.
- Policies pertaining to disabilities and inclusion alone cannot translate into effective or quality of life for persons with disabilities. These policies must be backed by real actions, resources and sufficient budgetary allocations.
- When we talk about resources these include physical as well as human resources. Physical resources include infrastructure and assistive technologies that facilitate the living standard of persons with disabilities. And human resources are those who have positive attitude, skills and knowledge to engage and implement the policy at the grassroots level to benefit persons with disabilities. In addition to this, every country needs to ensure that they have sufficient budgetary allocations to support the policy that each country represented here has developed.
- We also need to pursue policy effectiveness which will result from effective management practices of available resources. Often many countries allocate resources for policy that

they have developed to support persons with disabilities but sometimes these resources are not enough or managed effectively. We need to remove waste from our systems.

- Policy must be matched with training of experts. Normally, countries develop policy to implement programs to benefit persons with disabilities. But often they forget the training mechanism which is how to develop experts to implement and evaluate the policies. In a nutshell, effective policies need effective experts or people who understand policies or know the cultural and social context well enough to implement the policies. It is important for every country to match expert training with the policy so that people who implement the disability and aging policies are supported to develop the necessary skills for administering the policies at the macro (country, government) and micro level (school, community).
- Policies and programs must be updated from times to times using cutting-edge research knowledge. Regularly reviewing and updating policies and programs will lead to positive transformation to ensure outcomes for persons with disabilities are continually enhanced.

Key recommendations

1. Match disability policies with adequate funding for health, education, employment provision and social participation for PWDs based on an actual national context and concerns.
2. Provide adequate training to teachers, family and other professionals working in the interest of PWDs.
3. Make education and curriculum flexible to provide opportunity for full access and participation of PWDs along with market and society's needs.

4. Increase access to assistive technologies, create barrier-free environment in schools, workplace and the wider community.
5. Review employment policies for PWDs and increase their accessibility to employment.
6. Provide systematic customized employment and job coach matching needs of PWDs and employers as nationwide strategy.
7. Consider the aged and disaster intervention as a critical component of disability policy and programs
8. Increase advocacy programs and reduce negative attitudes.
9. Utilize interagency collaboration as a theoretical framework for networking and supporting PWDs.
10. Regularly conduct research, including establish a “Regional Disability Studies Center” and keep accurate record on persons with disability, national and regional programs and policy adoption based on research findings and monitoring.
