



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Concept Note and Agenda

Fifth Meeting of the Inter-sessional Expert Group on Disability (IGED)

“Disability Assessment and Determination Systems in the Arab Region”

17 December 2020

10:00 am to 1:00 pm Beirut time

online meeting

1. BACKGROUND

Since the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted in 2006, the field of international disability policy has undergone a paradigm shift from a medical approach, focused on the individual and their condition, to understanding disability from human-rights perspective and taking into account the impact of the environment on an individual’s specific condition. In a human rights perspective, disability is the result of the interaction between an individual condition and the surrounding social and physical environment.

Almost all Arab countries have ratified the CRPD and have committed to changing their laws and institutional frameworks to ensure the social inclusion of persons with disabilities in all facets of life.

While progress is recorded in several legal and policy areas such as the issuance of national laws and the development of national disability strategies, one core policy area remains elusive so far: how to adopt a disability assessment and determination system that conforms with the CRPD’s human rights-based approach.

This has been a challenge for two reasons: firstly, because the current understanding, and sometimes definition of ‘disability’, is still based on a medical approach to disability in the Arab region. This necessitates a conceptual shift that has not fully materialized yet. Second, because there are technical challenges that countries face depending on their unique socio-economic context, geographic make-up, and governing institutional structures. Some of these technical challenges countries face include resource constraints, lack of technical knowledge of CRPD compliant assessment systems, and shortage of trained professionals who can apply them.

2. Objectives of the workshop

Following up on the Fourth Inter-sessional Expert Group on Disability (IGED) meeting held in December 2019 in Cairo, the Fifth IGED meeting will convene for two objectives. The first to present and discuss the draft technical paper entitled: “Disability Assessment and Determination Systems in the Arab Region: An Overview.” Feedback from country focal points will be taken into account in the updating of the final version of the paper. Second, the workshop will be an opportunity to foster peer-learning and knowledge sharing, where countries are invited to share their experience in transitioning to a CRPD-

compliant assessment and determination system. All countries are invited to present, especially those who wish to update the IGED on their progress since the last IGED meeting (Dec-2019 until Dec-2020).

3. Country presentations (5-6 minutes each)

Countries who wish to present during session 2 of the meeting can prepare a short presentation answering the following questions

- a) How is disability assessed and determined in your country?
- b) Is there a planned or current transition to a CRPD-compliant system? (based on ICF or WHODAS 2.0 for example)
- c) What changes has your disability assessment and determination system undergone from Dec-2019 until Dec 2020?
- d) What are the main challenges you are facing?
- e) What lessons learned can you share?
- f) What would you like to know from other countries?

4. Draft agenda

Thursday 17 December 2020	
9:30- 10:00	<i>Login to test platform</i>
10:00 – 10:10	Opening and introduction Gisela Nauk, Chief of Inclusive Social Development Section, ESCWA Round of introductions
10:10 – 10:40	Session 1: Presentation of draft technical paper: “Disability assessment and determination systems in the Arab world” Sumaya Almajthoob, Associate Social Affairs Officer, ESCWA
10:40 – 11:40	Session 2: Country presentations on transitioning to CRPD-compliant assessment and determination systems <i>(5-6 minutes for each country presentation)</i> Moderator: Gisela Nauk, ESCWA <i>*All countries are welcome to sign up to present</i>
11:40 – 12:10	Discussion on session (1) and (2) Disability Assessment and Determination
12:10– 12:20	IGED Workplan 2021 and updates
12:20 – 12:30	Wrap up