

End of Year Report of the IASC Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, December 2018

1. Key objective:

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (Task Team) was established in 2016 with the **key objective to work jointly on the development of IASC-endorsed Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action** (the Guidelines).

2. General achievements:

In order to achieve the key objective of a thorough and participatory process, the Guidelines development was started in 2017 and further continued in 2018, engaging governments, UN agencies, humanitarian and development organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities across the Pacific, Latin America, Asia, Africa, Middle East and North Africa, as well as global focal points. These stakeholders, in addition to humanitarian coordination mechanisms, humanitarian sectors and clusters, as well as donors, have engaged as members of the Task Team itself and/or in the regional consultative workshops. In total, more than 600 humanitarian actors had a chance to participate.

In parallel to establishing the participatory process, the Task Team co-chairs mobilized resources for the work of the task team from the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, as well as the governments of Australia, Finland and Germany.

3. Specific achievements & key products:

Specific achievements:

In addition to establishing a thorough participatory consultation process, a first task was a desk review of the existing evidence and guidance. This *Desk Review on Humanitarian Action Inclusive of Persons with Disabilities* began in 2017 and was completed in March 2018.

The desk review contributed to identify operational and policy opportunities and gaps which informed the design and direction of the online multi-stakeholder consultation and the face-to-face workshops, which were undertaken in five regions in 2018. The **global online consultation reached out to future potential users of the Guidelines, including governments. Thereafter five regional consultations** were organized in partnership with Organizations of Persons with disabilities and other humanitarian actors in the [Pacific](#) (Fiji, January 2018) and the [Middle East](#) (Beirut, March 2018)¹. The input from these consultations resulted in a first comprehensive Draft. **Further regional consultations were held in [Latin-America](#) (Ecuador, April 2018), [Africa](#) (Ethiopia, May 2018), and [Asia](#) (Bangladesh, May 2018).**

Effective consultations were achieved ensuring the inclusion of the most marginalized groups in humanitarian situations for example, persons who are deafblind, persons with psychosocial and

¹ Key outcomes were shared on the IASC Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action's IASC Website.

intellectual disabilities, and indigenous persons with disabilities. **A consultation with self-advocates with intellectual disabilities** was conducted in Birmingham, together with Inclusion International. An [easy-read version of the initial Guidelines](#) facilitated the participation of persons with intellectual disabilities. Supported by Women's Refugee Commission, [consultations](#) on gender-based violence and person with disabilities during humanitarian crisis were held in [Africa](#) and [Asia](#) in May. Another opportunity seized for consultation was the [Humanitarian Networking and Partnership Week](#), 2018. During that week humanitarian networks and actors were engaged in a session for reflections on the type of partnerships and partners that can support humanitarian action inclusive of persons with disabilities. As a result of those consultations and sessions the Guideline draft was further refined.

In April 2018 the Task Team established 10 sector-specific working groups through [a call for sector experts](#) to develop the content for the following specific chapters of the Guidelines: Food Security & Livelihoods; WASH; Health; Shelter and Settlement; Information, Camp Coordination and Camp Management; Protection; Education; Mental Health and Psychosocial Support; and Data and Policy Frameworks. **Ten humanitarian experts** produced the core content for those specific chapters of the Guidelines.

In August a call for documentation of practices on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action was launched to feed evidence from field practice into the further development of the Guidelines. Over sixty case studies were submitted to the Task Team, and a sub-working group from within the Task Team members was established to discuss, review and nominate practices which could complement the Guidelines.

The review process of the content of the Guidelines commenced with a meeting of a **Core group** of Task Team members in September 2018 in Geneva, and **two multi-stakeholder consultative workshops in Geneva and Brussels**, in December 2018. Those workshops focused on reviewing the current draft Guidelines to **assess their relevance, usability and applicability in the field**.

Through achieving this multifaceted and participatory process, the content and shape of the Guidelines **builds upon the diverse experience and expertise of more than 600 stakeholders from Governments, Organizations of Persons with disabilities, UN agencies and other humanitarian actors**.

Key Products, 2018:

Desk Review; Draft 2 of the Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action; Reports of the findings of the online consultation and the regional consultations in Africa, Asia, Middle East, Latin-America and at the Inclusion International conference. The majority of these products are available on the Task Team website, with few remaining ones in the process of being finalized and/or uploaded.

4. Pending projects or opportunities for follow up

The consultative and participatory nature of the Guidelines' development has required an extension in the drafting time of the Guidelines, which are now expected to be completed by the end of the first semester 2019. The submission of the final Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action for endorsement to the IASC Working Group and Principals for adoption is planned for June 2019. This requires the extension of the working structure in the form of a Task Team or similar structure on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action until June 2019.

New resourcing opportunities were identified and secured by the Task Team through funding from the German Government's Federal Foreign Office in 2018, while other resourcing opportunities are pending decisions from the Australian Government at the beginning of 2019. These resources will be utilized for the finalization of the Guidelines through an online feedback mechanism and face-to-face validation workshops with participants from five regions; as well as final editing, design and/or initial launch of the final product. The planned validation workshops and another Core group meeting of expert humanitarian actors present key opportunities to further consult on effective rollout strategies for maximum uptake of the Guidelines.

Funding from the Australian government was made available to the Womens' Refugee Commission for organizations to pilot a portion of the draft Gender-based Violence (GBV) chapter of the Guidelines. This was done in order to demonstrate and document how GBV guidance from the Guidelines has been practically applied to support the protection and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities in humanitarian action. This piloting aims to produce feedback to revise the Guidelines, document practices and inform the roll-out.

5. Suggested priority activities 2019

Given the opportunities available and the objective the Task Team, the following priority activities are planned to be implemented for the finalization of the Guideline and preparation of an effective Rollout through a participatory process from January- June 2019:

- Integration of Online feedbacks (collected Dec. 2018- Jan. 2019) and Consultative workshops (Dec. 2019);
- Setup Working Group from among Task Team members on Rollout and Launch of the Guideline;
- Validation workshops engaging previous participating humanitarian actors from five regions on validating final draft Guideline and on Direction of Launch and Roll-Out;
- Final editing and design; and
- Core group meeting on final Guideline and Rollout.

6. Members

The Task Team consists of a diverse membership from 72 organizations, including representatives of governments, networks of organizations of persons with disabilities, universities, UN agencies, other multilateral actors such as ICRC/IFRC, cluster representatives and humanitarian non-governmental organizations.