Title: Geneva Launch of the IASC Disability Guidelines
Day and time: Tuesday, February 04th, from 14:00 to 15:30 h
Place: CICG, Room 4

Host: OCHA (HNPW) + Geneva “Group of Friends” of Member States supporting the Charter for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action

Problem Statement and objectives

Persons with disabilities continue to be among the most marginalized in any crisis-affected community: 80% live in poverty, and an estimated 9.7 million are forcibly displaced because of persecution, conflict and human rights violations. In some cases, morbidity in disasters has been estimated at a rate four times higher than that of persons without disabilities, as are instances of sexual violence and abuse.

Compounding this marginalization, persons with disabilities continue most often to be considered only as recipients of aid. In order to achieve the aim of “leaving no-one behind”, a shift from vulnerability to resilience and a new way of thinking about how to address needs are required, as well as a recognition of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations as a critical stakeholder in humanitarian settings.

This session will allow for the launch, at Geneva level, of the new Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, endorsed by the IASC Principals in October 2019 and launched in New York on 12 November 2019. The publication of the Guidelines represents the culmination of the work of the IASC Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action since 2016, which also incorporated the feedback and suggestions gathered during several previous editions of the HNPW.
The Guidelines are the first humanitarian guidelines to be developed with and by persons with disabilities and their representative organizations together with traditional humanitarian stakeholders. They complement and build on existing humanitarian standards and guidelines and are aligned with core human rights frameworks, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. They will assist humanitarian actors, governments and affected communities to coordinate, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate essential actions that foster the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action, resulting in the full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities and changing practice across all sectors and in all phases of humanitarian action.

This session will be hosted by the Group of (Member States) Friends of the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. High-level panelists from Member States, UN, other humanitarian Agencies and the International Disability Alliance (TBC) will share their views about how this new guidance will benefit their work and how they intend to mainstream them into their field and global projects. Participants will also learn more about the connection between the Guidelines and the new United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS). Indeed, the system-wide roll-out of the UNDIS and of its accountability framework over the next years is likely to be of relevance not only to the United Nations system as a whole, but also to the greater humanitarian community with which it cooperates.

**Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations**

- Share high level commitments to support implementation of the new IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.
- Discussion of the role of the new IASC Guidelines in promoting a transformation in disability inclusive humanitarian action
- Learn about the links between the new IASC Guidelines and the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS)

**Speakers:**

- **Chair:** Ms. Elizabeth Wilde, Deputy Head of Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, Australia
- **Ms. Ursula Mueller,** OCHA Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator
- **Panel:**
  - Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, Under Secretary General for Partnerships at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
  - Mr. Ignacio Packer, Executive Director of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)
  - Mr. Abraham Abdallah, President of the Arab Organization of People with Disabilities
  - Mr. Gopal Mitra, Senior Social Officer, Executive Office of the Secretary General, United Nations (by audio or video)
- **Closing remarks:** H.E. Ms. Rita French, UK International Ambassador for Human Rights and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva

**Session Structure/Run Off:**
Welcome by Chair - 5 minutes
Introductory remarks – 10 minutes
Panel presentations (7-8 minutes for each panellist) – 30 minutes in total
Followed by an interactive discussion with the audience (approx.25 minutes). CART will be provided.
Closing remarks- 5 minutes

Note: To learn more about the IASC Guidelines components relevant to their respective roles/responsibilities and the new Reference Group on Inclusion of Persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, participants are encouraged to consider assisting also to the following session in Room 4, hosted by the former co-chairs of the IASC task team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, (16:00 – 17:30h)

Background Materials:


Contacts:
For more information, please contact:
- Ms. Claire Clement, Humanitarian Adviser, Australian Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Geneva, email: claire.clement@dfat.gov.au; tel. +41 (0)22 799 9107
- Ms. Isabelle de Muyser-Boucher, OCHA Disability Focal Point, email: demuyser-boucher@un.org, tel. + 41 (0)22 9173290