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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE
WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED
PERSONS AND THE FAMILY

Implementation of the World Programme of Action
concerning Disabled Persons

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/99 of 20 December 1993, which requested the Secretary-General to continue to give higher priority to disability issues within the programmes of work of the United Nations system and to report to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session on relevant developments in the area and in the context of his report on the development of a plan of action to implement the long-term strategy to further the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. The draft plan of action, requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/99 and by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1993/20 of 27 July 1993, is attached as an annex to the present report.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS

A. Measures undertaken by the United Nations system

1. United Nations Secretariat

(a) Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development

2. In its capacity as focal point for the United Nations programme on disabled persons, the Department has directed special attention during the period under review to furthering implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/96 of 20 December 1993 (see annex), and to promotion and development of national disability committees and related coordinating bodies, pursuant to resolution 46/96 of 16 December 1991.

3. To promote and strengthen coordination of national disability policies and programmes, the Department organized a number of training seminars with financing from extrabudgetary resources. These included the regional training seminar for Eastern Europe and the Baltic States on adapting guidelines for establishment and development of national coordinating committees on disability or similar bodies (Sinaia, Romania, 20-24 September 1993), and the regional seminar for Latin America on national disability programmes (San José, 7-10 March 1994).

4. A major development in furthering implementation of the Standard Rules has been the designation of Mr. Bengt Lindqvist, former Minister for Social Affairs (Sweden), as Special Rapporteur for the Standard Rules. The position is being supported by voluntary contributions. The Government of Sweden has indicated that it will provide an in-kind contribution; the Government of Japan has indicated that it will provide an earmarked contribution for activities of the Special Rapporteur; and Governments are also considering possible support to the Special Rapporteur.

5. Greater awareness and understanding of the Standard Rules are being promoted through their publication and distribution by the United Nations, Member States and the non-governmental community. This includes publication by the United Nations of the full text of the Rules in the six official languages of the Organization, as well as in English, French and Spanish Braille. The Department of Public Information issued a brief information note on the Rules. The Rules have already been published through other sources in the following languages: Czech, Finnish, Icelandic, Japanese, Korean and Swedish.
6. The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development is directing special attention to finalizing technical reports on project planning in the disability field and disability legislation.
7. The Manual on Integration of Disability Issues into National Planning and Development Projects, prepared with a voluntary contribution from the Government of Finland, is designed to be a source of practical knowledge and information to assist Governments plan and implement policies and programmes in the disability field. The manual is scheduled to be published in 1995; it may also be incorporated in a proposed update of the Advisory Note on Disability of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
8. The Manual on Disability Legislation in Developing Countries, prepared with a voluntary contribution from the Government of Sweden, is based upon expert meetings organized during the period under review: the consultative expert meeting on national disability legislation for developing countries in the southern African subregion (Mbabane, 6-8 April 1992), the consultative expert meeting for Asia and Pacific (Kuala Lumpur, 6-8 December 1993), and the regional seminar on national disability programmes for Latin America (San José, 7-10 March 1994). The manual is scheduled to be published during 1995.
9. The Department provides the secretariat for three major international events occurring during the biennium 1994-1995: the International Year of the Family (1994), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995) and the Fourth World Conference on Women: action for equality, development and peace (Beijing, 4-15 September 1995). Preparations for each event are characterized by due concern for disability issues. For instance, regional preparatory meetings organized prior to the observation in 1994 of the International Year of the Family included disability among priority issues addressed. The ad hoc secretariat for the International Year of the Family recently issued an occasional paper on "Families and disability". The draft programme of action considered the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development at its second session (New York, 22 August-2 September 1994) directs special attention to disability in connection with the three priority themes of the Summit, social integration and employment in particular. The draft platform for action, considered by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-eighth session (New York, 7-18 March 1994), acting as preparatory body for the Fourth World Conference, addresses disability with respect to areas in which gender and disability issues intersect priority Conference themes.

(b) Statistical Division, Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis

10. The Statistical Division of the Secretariat continued work on development of disability statistics in two areas: design of statistical methodology and standards for data collection; and production of statistics and indicators of disability.

11. An expert group meeting on the development of impairment, disability and handicap statistics will be organized by the Division from 7 to 11 November 1994 at Voorburg, the Netherlands, hosted by the Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics. The meeting will review existing disability data collection methods and standards and prepare a guiding set of principles for use in census, surveys and registration systems. The meeting has been planned to coordinate with the next international meeting of the World Health Organization (WHO) on revision of the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps, also to be held in the Netherlands, from 14 to 18 November 1994.

12. The Statistical Division and the North America Collaborating Centre (National Centre for Health Statistics) jointly organized an international meeting on the scientific review of applications of the International Classification (Harbour Town, Maryland, USA, 31 May-3 June 1994).

13. A disability-related indicator was developed by the Division and WHO in connection with preparation of global indicators for the third monitoring of progress towards health for all, to be carried out at national level by member States: "number of people identified as having one of the following types of disabilities: difficulty seeing, difficulty hearing, difficulty speaking, difficulty moving, difficulty learning/comprehending/remembering, or other (specify)". The indicator was published in Implementation of strategies for health for all by the year 2000; third monitoring of progress - common framework. 1/ A similar indicator was developed by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WHO in collaboration with the Division to assess progress in implementing the objectives of the World Summit for Children; it is reported in Indicators for monitoring health goals of the World Summit for Children recommended by WHO and UNICEF for national monitoring, programme management and international reporting (1993).

14. The Statistical Division continued work on development and practical use of the United Nations Disability Statistics Database for production of statistics and indicators. A consultant study was prepared during 1994, entitled "A Human Development Agenda for Disability: Statistical Considerations". An extract of the findings was included in the discussion on human security in the UNDP 1994 Human Development Report. The Division contributed an article on "Disability Statistics in Studies of Ageing" to the Demographic Yearbook; special issue on ageing, 2/ that presents age- and gender-specific disability data for 57 countries and discusses implications for policy formulation and programme planning. This project was supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). A "Statistical Chart on World Families", 3/ co-financed by the Trust Fund for International Year of the Family, was compiled by the Division and includes data on the percentage of people with disabilities for 87 countries. The Division prepared with WHO a report on health statistics, the

Conference of European Statisticians on the International Classification and the development of disability statistics for the Fifth Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)/WHO Joint Meeting. 4/ The Report of the International Workshop on the Development and Dissemination of Statistics on Persons with Disabilities, organized by Statistics Canada and the Division at Ottawa from 13 to 16 October 1992, is available in English and French. The Division has drafted, in collaboration with WHO, a training manual on development of disability statistics for the use of programme managers and planners, focusing on production of national disability statistics through surveys, censuses and registration systems. The manual is scheduled for publication by the United Nations in 1994 and has been co-financed by the Swedish International Development Authority.

(c) United Nations Centre for Human Rights

15. The World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, reaffirmed in its Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that all human rights and fundamental freedoms were universal and thus unreservedly included people with disabilities. The Commission on Human Rights and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have been encouraged to pay due attention to the promotion and protection of human rights of persons with disabilities. Resolution 1994/27 of the Commission on Human Rights reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities.

(d) United Nations Development Programme

16. Through its Interregional Project for Disabled People, which focuses on community-based rehabilitation for people with disabilities, UNDP produced and published the following documents: "Prejudice and Dignity: an introduction to community-based rehabilitation" (1993), and "OMAR in Rehabilitation: a guide on operations monitoring and analysis of results" and "Play with your children" (Africa version, 1994). The project also conducted training seminars and workshops in India, Finland, and Switzerland in 1994.

17. IMPACT, the International Initiative Against Avoidable Disablement, a joint initiative of UNDP, UNICEF and WHO, focuses on promotion of integrated approaches to strengthening the health and development sectors at the community level to prevent avoidable disabilities and aims to reduce and, when possible, eliminate causes and incidences of disabling conditions or accidents. During 1993 the director of the India IMPACT Foundation was awarded the Department of Public Information Grand Award in recognition of her contributions to the development and operational success of "Lifeline Express", which is a joint public and private sector initiative in using trains to bring needed medical care, such as immunization, diagnostic services and surgery for disabling conditions, to rural villages. An IMPACT pilot project in Mali on eradication of the guinea-worm provides an example of the importance IMPACT attaches to community participation in the implementation of preventive interventions.

(e) United Nations Children's Fund

18. UNICEF is currently engaged in implementation of its mid-term plan for childhood disability (1994-1997), which focuses on (a) consolidation of preventive measures such as immunization and the control of micro-nutrient deficiencies; (b) establishing systems to facilitate early detection of disabilities; and (c) supporting community-based rehabilitation as an integral part of basic services.

19. UNICEF reports that 70 countries, including 56 developing countries, have included programmes on prevention of disability, early detection and community-based rehabilitation services for children who are disabled. In addition, the Convention on the Rights of Children, which in its article 23 refers to rights of children with disabilities, has been ratified by more than 150 countries.

20. UNICEF has called for a total ban on the production, use, stockpiling as well as the sale and export of anti-personnel land-mines, a major cause of disablement both in times of armed conflict and in reconstruction efforts.

(f) United Nations Refugee and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

21. UNRWA has taken a number of initiatives in the field of disability, including community-based services for disabled persons in its area of operations, through community rehabilitation centres and health programmes aimed at preventing disabling illness and conditions. UNRWA reports that poliomyelitis is virtually eradicated among Palestinian refugee children. UNRWA has set a target for 2 per cent of new staff recruitment to be drawn from appropriately qualified disabled persons. In the light of recent political developments, UNRWA intends to direct special attention to building capacities of the Palestinian people to plan and manage sustainable services for disabled persons, and to effective integration of disabled persons, in the educational, social and economic sectors.

2. Regional commissions of the United Nations

(a) Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

22. Several member Governments of ESCAP have contributed to establishment of a trust fund to promote the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993-2002). The Asia-Pacific Inter-organizational Task Force on Disability-related Concerns, composed of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations concerned with disability, has expanded its membership and provided support to the implementation of its "Agenda for Action".

23. Regional action is emphasizing strengthening of self-help organizations of people with disabilities, promotion of non-handicapping environments, facilitating regional cooperation on production of low-cost, high-quality technical aids, poverty alleviation among rural people with disabilities and

enactment of disability legislation. To that end, during the United Nations Decade (1983-1992) ESCAP organized training workshops on management of self-help organizations of people with disabilities, carried out surveys, prepared technical guidelines on improving access to the built environment in developing countries of the ESCAP region and collaborated with non-governmental organizations in convening regional conferences of non-governmental organizations to promote the Asia-Pacific Decade. In 1993 ESCAP published a compendium of reference material on the Decade, "Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002: the starting point".

(b) Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

24. ESCWA is revising the draft regional long-term strategy to further the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, formulated during the substantive session of the 1992 cultural event for disabled persons in the ESCWA region (Amman, 17 and 18 October 1992).

25. In October 1993, ESCWA co-organized, with the University Rehabilitation Institute at Ljubljana, the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics and the Government of Jordan, a workshop for key medical and technical personnel in prosthetics and orthotics for the Western Asia and Eastern Mediterranean region (Amman, 8-15 October 1993).

26. In conjunction with ongoing reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in the war-torn areas of the region, ESCWA designated a specialist in "barrier-free" design to assist efforts in Lebanon.

27. ESCWA, in collaboration with UNICEF and interested non-governmental organizations, will organize a regional seminar on the role of the family in integrating disabled women into society (Amman, 16-18 October 1994). The seminar will provide a forum to discuss and assess the nature and situation of disabled Arab women and their children and the level of their social integration. The seminar is expected to strengthen the ESCWA regional inter-agency task force on disability, first established in 1989.

(c) Economic Commission for Europe

28. ECE is compiling a final review publication of its project on rehabilitation engineering, which is based upon workshops in the United States of America, Norway and the Czech Republic. The project objective was to bring together designers, manufacturers, rehabilitation experts and users to identify and analyse the status of rehabilitation services, provision of technical aids and assistive technologies, and development of market potential for rehabilitation. Closer international cooperation in the field was recommended, especially with Central and Eastern European countries in transition. The ECE Inland Transport Committee collected and analysed information provided by member States on measures adopted to facilitate mobility of disabled persons; and amendments to the Convention on Road Traffic have been prepared. In the field of human settlements and housing, ECE has undertaken a project on the status and conditions of the elderly and of persons with disabilities in the ECE region.

3. Specialized agencies

(a) International Labour Organization

29. ILO activities in the disability field focus on promotion of equal training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. ILO Convention No. 159 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons, the main tool in this area, has been ratified by 48 countries.

30. Thirty-one technical cooperation projects currently are being implemented by ILO in this area, of which some are being undertaken in cooperation with other United Nations bodies and organizations. ILO has published a guide for employers' organizations and a guide for workers' organizations on job creation for disabled people. ILO also published a guide for specialists working in its multidisciplinary teams on inclusion of disability issues in the advisory and training activities of the team.

31. In connection with its seventy-fifth anniversary, in 1994, ILO issued two publications in the disability field: "Towards Equalizing Opportunities for Disabled People in Asia: Guide", and "Disability Employment in Asia". The guide is a product of a consultative workshop organized by the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and the ILO East Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Team; it describes changes taking place in Asia and worldwide, suggests policy targets, describes a range of alternative strategies, including relative strengths and weaknesses, and underlines the goal of the equality of opportunity of people with disabilities. The second publication aims to promote awareness of the disability situation in the region and provide guidelines on disability and employment issues.

(b) Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations

32. FAO has ongoing vitamin A deficiency projects in a number of developing countries, including Burkina Faso, Ghana, India, Nepal, Nigeria and Viet Nam; possible expansion to other countries is under review. FAO reports that schemes to settle people who were formerly threatened with river blindness has been proceeding satisfactorily; many people are now returning or moving to the lands, estimated at 25 million hectares, that have been freed from the threat of oncocerciasis.

33. The 1992 International Conference on Nutrition produced the World Declaration and Plan of Action for Nutrition, which inspired Governments to take the initiative for the elaboration of a national action plan, including specific activities for disabled persons. Integration of disabled persons as beneficiaries of national development projects for high-value horticulture crops has been a feature of programmes under implementation in Uganda and Bangladesh. FAO also provides technical assistance to train disabled groups in the production of fruit and vegetables in India.

(c) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

34. UNESCO cooperated with the Government of Spain to organize the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (Salamanca, 7-10 June 1994). The Conference considered new thinking on learning disabilities and on the relationship between special education provision and general school reform.

(d) World Health Organization

35. WHO continued its efforts to promote the strengthening of rehabilitation services through community-based services and health care referral services. During the period under review, 34 countries benefited from WHO workshops focusing on disability issues. Fourteen countries received direct assistance for programme planning, monitoring or evaluation. Guidelines for management, training and selected rehabilitation interventions have been prepared and are available.

36. WHO prepared, in cooperation with ILO and UNESCO, a joint position paper on the concept of community-based rehabilitation to inform policy-makers and programme managers on its objectives and methods for implementation.

4. Technical cooperation activities

37. In its resolution 48/99, the General Assembly urged Governments to integrate disability concerns in technical cooperation activities, including exchanges of knowledge and experience. This has been considered in the preceding paragraphs. In addition, the United Nations Secretariat, in cooperation with the Government of the Netherlands and the World Veterans Federation, a non-governmental organization, organized on request an advisory mission to Belarus in January 1993. The mission focused on disability policy formulation, legislation, services, training and programme coordination. The mission assisted in analyses of the current situation of disabled persons, in identification of priorities for policy formulation and in formulation of options for short- and long-term action. An ad hoc advisory mission was undertaken to South Africa in October 1993 at the request of Government, the African National Congress and the National Council for the Physically Disabled. Consultations focused on national disability programmes and implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

5. United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability

38. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/88 of 16 December 1992, special attention was directed to building national capacities and expanding technical exchanges among developing countries to further implementation of the development objectives of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons.

39. During the period under review the Fund received more than 100 inquiries about possibilities of obtaining technical and financial assistance in the disability field. Inquiries came in the main from the non-governmental community, which reflects the growing sense of empowerment among organizations of people with disabilities. Proposals received are reviewed by substantive specialists, whose appraisals are provided to all parties concerned with the proposal. Funding recommendations are prepared for activities that reflect most closely priorities identified for the Fund by the General Assembly. Proposals from non-governmental organizations require endorsement of the concerned governmental office.

40. Table 1 indicates that 11 of the 12 proposals approved for funding during 1993 supported specific action benefiting people with disabilities at national and regional levels. This involved a resource commitment by the Fund of \$160,120. Of that total, \$57,520 (36 per cent) was provided in the form of co-financing grants from the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) under its cooperative programme with the Fund. Co-financing grants from AGFUND now total more than \$1 million and AGFUND remains the single largest contributor to the Fund. It should be noted that, consistent with the Fund mandate, each \$1 granted by the Fund helps to mobilize on average an additional \$4 for action in the disability field.

Table 1. Distribution of grants for 1993, by region

Region	Number of grants	<u>Grant amount</u>	<u>Total budget</u>
		United States dollars	
Africa	2	18 000	49 100
Asia and the Pacific	3	35 600	361 805
Latin America and the Caribbean	2	21 000	58 100
Western Asia	4	75 520	267 500
Interregional	<u>1</u>	<u>10 000</u>	<u>47 000</u>
Total	<u>12</u>	<u>160 120</u>	<u>783 315</u>

41. Table 2 provides a list of Fund-assisted activities approved during 1993. More than half are concerned with training and institution-building, including two projects co-financed with AGFUND. Two projects focused on improving the flow of information on disability issues and concerns of peoples with disabilities. Support was also provided for NGO-initiatives in income-generation in rural Zambia and in sports for people with disabilities in Western Asia. The Fund-assisted initiative of the Alvarez International Centre on Ageing, in the Dominican Republic, focuses on increasing the involvement of older persons in the organization and delivery of essential services among rural people with disabilities.

Table 2. Projects approved in 1993

Location	Project title
Dominican Republic	Survey and seminar on self-help networks of older disabled persons
India	Woodwork training for the deaf
Interregional	World Federation of the Deaf: preparation of an organization manual
Lebanon	Al-Amal Institute for Mentally Handicapped Children (phase II) <u>a/</u>
Regional	
Africa	Training leaders of the Eastern Africa Federation of the Disabled
Asia and Pacific	Training instructors in oesophageal speaking
Asia and Pacific	Support for initiatives of developing countries in education of the deaf/blind
Western Asia	Arab regional summer games for people with disabilities
Western Asia	Regional seminar on disabled women
Western Asia	Workshop for key medical and technical personnel in prosthetics and orthotics
Trinidad and Tobago	Production of a career booklet on people with disabilities
Zambia	Self-help project for the disabled at Kasama

a/ Co-financed by AGFUND: \$26,550.

42. The review of project cycle activities in 1993 indicates that the Fund plays a unique role both in furthering implementation of policies and programmes of benefit to persons with disabilities and in supporting efforts by disabled people to strengthen negotiating capacities for policy design, programme planning and project implementation. The data suggest that seed-money grants of the Fund are instrumental in mobilizing resources not otherwise available for action of benefit to people with disabilities. The increased involvement of organizations of disabled people in cooperation with government reflects growing public-private-voluntary sector partnership for action in the disability field.

6. Panel of Eminent Persons

43. In its resolution 48/99, the General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to pursue his efforts to establish a panel of persons with wide experience in the field of disability to advise him on disability matters. In that connection it might be recalled that chapter IV, "Monitoring mechanism", of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/96, refers to the establishment of a panel of experts from among international organizations of persons with disabilities to be consulted by the Special Rapporteur for the Rules and when appropriate the Secretariat. In conjunction with the designation of Mr. B. Lindqvist as Special Rapporteur, representatives of organizations of disabled persons met at Headquarters (20 and 21 August 1994) to review and discuss his programme of work and took a decision on a framework for the expert panel envisaged in the Standard Rules. In the light of those developments further study is required of experience gained in such a manner of providing expert advice in the disability field to the Special Rapporteur and to the Secretariat.

B. Cooperation with Governments and international non-governmental organizations

44. In its resolution 1993/20, the Economic and Social Council requests that the draft plan of action to implement a long-term strategy to further implementation of the World Programme of Action be developed in consultation with international non-governmental organizations of persons with disabilities. In fact the non-governmental community, in cooperation with Governments concerned, made important contributions to furthering implementation of the World Programme itself during the period under review.

45. The Secretariat collaborated with the Government of Iceland, the Icelandic National Federation of Persons with Disabilities and the Icelandic Organization of Disabled Persons to organize an international conference entitled "Beyond normalization; towards 'One Society for All'" (Reykjavik, 1-3 June 1994). The meeting was attended by 700 participants, had substantive sessions dealing with such issues as national disability legislation and international cooperation, and adopted the Reykjavik Declaration in support of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the work of the Special Rapporteur for the Standard Rules.

46. The World Veterans Federation organized its Sixth International Conference on Legislation Concerning Veterans and Victims of War at Lisbon from 13 to 16 March 1994. The Conference was sponsored by the Government of Portugal and was attended by representatives of 41 countries and observers from both the United Nations and 15 additional countries. The Conference adopted a series of recommendations, which included international cooperation in the field of prosthetic and orthotic devices, on the situation and welfare of war-disabled persons and their families, and on assistance to civilian victims of war.

47. Major upcoming events of international non-governmental organizations in the disability field include the Assembly and Sixth European Regional Conference of Rehabilitation International (Budapest, 4-9 September 1994); the Eleventh World Congress of the International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicap (New Delhi, 17-20 November 1994); the First World Assembly (and Fourth World Congress) of Disabled Peoples' International (Sydney, Australia, 1-11 December 1994); and the Twelfth World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf (Vienna, 6-15 July 1995).

III. DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION TO IMPLEMENT THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY
TO FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF
ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS TO THE YEAR 2000
AND BEYOND

48. The draft plan of action, entitled "Towards a society for all: Long-term Strategy to Implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons to the Year 2000 and Beyond" is contained in the annex to the present document. It is based upon the report of the United Nations Expert Meeting on the Long-Term Strategy to Further Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons to the Year 2000 and Beyond (Vancouver, Canada, 25-29 April 1992), 5/ the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group to Elaborate Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for People with Disabilities, 6/ views received from both Governments and non-governmental organizations, and relevant developments during the period under review.

Notes

- 1/ WHO/HST/GSP/93.3.
- 2/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.XIII.9.
- 3/ Ibid., Sales No. E.93.XVII.9.
- 4/ CES/AC.36/51; EURO/ICP/IIST/157/51.
- 5/ E/CN.5/1993/4.
- 6/ E/CN.5/1993/5.

ANNEX

Towards a society for all: Long-term Strategy to Implement
the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons
to the Year 2000 and Beyond

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Long-term Strategy to Implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (the "Long-term Strategy") was developed at the end of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992) through broad-based consultations in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 45/91, 46/96 and 48/99 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/20.

2. The Long-term Strategy provides a framework for collaborative action in implementing the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (the "World Programme") (A/37/351/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII, recommendation 1 (IV)), as well as the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (the "Standard Rules") (resolution 48/96, annex). It incorporates those national, regional and global measures which proved successful and sustainable in the course of the Decade. It envisages national medium-term plans as the leading edge of the Strategy. The component elements of a national plan are suggested expecting, however, that these will be adapted to national needs, resources and aspirations. The Strategy's guiding vision is the concept of a society for all. Its foundation remains the three themes of the World Programme - prevention of disability, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities for disabled persons.

II. PREAMBLE

3. During the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992), consensus was reached on the need to remove the social and physical barriers that limit the participation of individuals in society. It became clear that society creates a handicap when it fails to accommodate the diversity of all its members.

4. People with disabilities often encounter attitudinal and environmental barriers that prevent their full, equal and active participation in society. These barriers impinge particularly on the well-being of persons with intellectual, mental or multiple disabilities. They add to the disadvantage customarily experienced by disabled persons belonging to such populations or social groups as women, children, the elderly and refugees.

5. In developing countries, where 80 per cent of the disabled population live, the widespread lack of basic necessities of life such as medical services, education, training, employment and shelter is acutely experienced by disabled persons.

6. The achievements of the Decade have been significant. They include a new level of leadership by organizations of disabled persons; an increasing willingness by civil society to adjust to the diversity of its members, including those with disabilities; greater recognition by the international community of the need to equalize opportunities for disabled persons, and widespread agreement on the effectiveness of community-based rehabilitation with disabled persons and their families actively involved in programme design, implementation and evaluation.

7. These and other achievements, as well as operational measures that proved successful during the past decade, provide the springboard for the Long-term Strategy. The Strategy, however, does not stand alone. It must be seen as an integral part of the goals and programmes of the greater society, including in the areas of sustainable development, technical cooperation, reduction of hunger and malnutrition, protection of the environment and promotion of peace, human rights, employment, shelter and functional literacy. It is in this broad context that the challenges faced by disabled persons need to be continually articulated and ultimately resolved.

III. TOWARDS A SOCIETY FOR ALL

8. In a society for all, the needs of all citizens constitute the basis for planning and policy. The general system of society is made accessible to all. By accommodating its structures and functioning to the needs of all, a society mobilizes the potential of all its citizens and, consequently, strengthens its developmental potential.

9. People with disabilities are a natural and integral part of society and, in the interest of society as a whole, should have opportunities to contribute their experience, talents and capabilities to national and international development.

10. The concept of a society for all, encompassing human diversity and the development of all human potential, can be said to embody, in a single phrase, the human rights instruments of the United Nations. Defining and translating the human rights of disabled persons into specific measures and programmes remains a major challenge. The recently adopted Standard Rules can help guide public policy in the direction of ensuring the human rights of disabled persons.

11. The Standard Rules focus on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons, one of the three main themes of the World Programme of Action. Rules 5 to 12 directly address eight areas of equal participation (each area containing a number of specific targets): accessibility, education, employment, income maintenance and social security, family life and personal integrity, culture, recreation and sports, and religion.

12. The concept and scope of rehabilitation, another major theme of the World Programme, evolved during the Decade so that greater emphasis is now placed on disabled persons and their families participating in the design, organization and evaluation of rehabilitation services concerning them, particularly in community-based rehabilitation. Rehabilitation encompasses counselling, training in self-care, provision of aids and devices, specialized education, vocational rehabilitation and others.

13. The third major theme of the World Programme, prevention of disabilities, calls for all-encompassing strategies such as those needed to end war, famine and malnutrition, as well as for quite specific programmes such as those needed to control certain diseases or make the roads and workplace safe.

14. The three themes of the World Programme, equalization of opportunities, rehabilitation and prevention provide the intellectual foundations of the strategy. During the Decade, efforts to equalize opportunities for disabled persons gained particular momentum, which should be maintained in the coming years, with special focus on the following three areas: human rights of disabled persons; empowerment of persons with disabilities; and involvement of disabled persons and their organizations as true partners in the development of programmes, policies and projects concerning them.

IV. STRATEGIC MEASURES

15. Since not all the necessary changes can be implemented immediately or simultaneously, a step-by-step approach is proposed, guided by the long-term vision of a society for all.

16. The core element of the Long-term Strategy is a series of national plans supported by regional and global activities.

17. After a lead-in period, 1995-1996, a medium-term national plan is proposed for 1997-2002, coinciding with the quinquennial review of the World Programme. A second plan for the years 2002-2007 would follow.

A. National level

18. A major effort will be required during the lead-in period of 1995-1996. Proposed activities for the lead-in include establishing a task force, convening a forum, organizing a national review, issuing a long-term policy statement and adopting medium-term targets. The nature and scope of each of these steps will be shaped by existing human and material resources, including by drawing on innovation, ingenuity and the involvement of institutions of civil society.

19. After the lead-in period, a five-year plan is proposed from 1997 to 2002, aiming to reach selected targets in that period. Operational measures that proved effective during the Decade could help to ensure that the targets are reached. Those measures are discussed below and include integrating disability issues into national policies, setting standards, mobilizing resources, decentralizing programme implementation, establishing partnerships, strengthening organizations of disabled persons, strengthening national coordinating committees and monitoring progress.

20. Success of the interim plans and overall Strategy rests upon government commitment, leadership by disabled persons' organizations, involvement of civil society and, where possible, permanent structures for implementation and monitoring. Setting well-defined and feasible targets will help all players to act towards the same objectives. Keeping plans simple, flexible and participatory from the outset will ensure their ongoing effectiveness.

1. Activities for lead-in period of 1995-1996

21. The following activities are proposed for the lead-in years of 1995-1996:

(a) Establishing a task force. Members of the task force should include representatives of the Government, of organizations of disabled persons, of rehabilitation and prevention specialists, and of important segments of civil society. Their principal task would be to prepare for a broad-based national forum;

(b) Convening a forum. A broad-based national forum should be convened to obtain input and long-term commitment to a national disability strategy. The forum could review the national disability situation, formulate a long-term policy statement and agree on medium-term targets. Participants could include representatives of selected ministries, the national coordinating committee, organizations of disabled persons, professionals, citizens groups, communities and families. It could involve legislators, business persons, donors and representatives of the United Nations agencies or bodies;

(c) Reviewing the situation. A review of existing policies and programmes should be made or updated as the basis for determining priority needs and resources. Needs and resources must be matched and translated into operational terms in a set of medium-term targets;

(d) Formulating or updating a long-term policy statement. The policy statement would form the conceptual framework of the Long-term Strategy, stating overall objectives and essential principles;

(e) Setting medium-term targets. Targets are necessary for the medium term since not all needs can be achieved at once. In setting targets, the following points may be helpful:

- (i) Targets should encompass the important issues raised in the World Programme - human rights, equalization of opportunities, rehabilitation and prevention. The World Programme and other United Nations instruments provide a guide for setting rehabilitation and prevention targets. The Standard Rules provide a source of targets in the area of equalization of opportunities. Conventions, guidelines and programmes both national and international are other sources of targets;
- (ii) Within these broad areas, some targets may focus directly on improving the actual living conditions of disabled persons (for example, the actual removal of physical barriers), while others may focus on enabling infrastructure or measures (such as legislation leading towards the eventual removal of physical barriers);
- (iii) Targets may also be of a promotional nature, intended to generate action that would be difficult to measure (for example, changing attitudes of the general public), while others may lend themselves more readily to measurement (for example, a precise increase in the numbers of disabled persons working in the media);

- (iv) Once agreement is reached on what is to be achieved, it is important to clarify who will be responsible, how and when;
- (v) Variables and indicators for each target should be clearly identified to assist in monitoring and evaluation, as discussed below in chapter IV, section C;
- (vi) Possible targets include the following:
 - a. Institutional/organizational: by 1997, a medium-term plan with a menu of targets for the years 1997-2002 to be formulated;
 - b. Human rights: by 1998, plans to be formulated for
 - (a) implementing Convention 159 of the International Labour Organization concerning employment of disabled persons; and
 - (b) applying the Convention on the Rights of the Child (resolution 44/25, annex) as it pertains to children with disabilities (articles 23, 27 and 39);
 - c. Equalization of opportunities: by 1998, the Standard Rules to be adopted in principle and certain rules selected for implementation before 2002;
 - d. Rehabilitation: by 1999, community-based rehabilitation to be established in __ rural areas (the number to be determined at national level);
 - e. Prevention: by 2002, the causes of avoidable impairment that lead to disability to be reduced by __ per cent (to be determined at the national level), in keeping with the strategies of the World Health Organization's Global Strategy of Health for All and those of IMPACT of the United Nations Development Programme.

2. Measures for the medium term 1997-2002

22. Experience gained during the Decade suggests that certain measures are particularly effective. These are discussed briefly below:

(a) Designating a lead agency, which could establish high visibility for the plan and ensure clear division of responsibilities among the many possible players. The lead agency would, ideally, be a government ministry or agency at the highest level;

(b) Strengthening national coordinating committees, which were very effective during the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981). The national coordinating committees should have a permanent structure with membership comprising the concerned government ministries, organizations of disabled persons, business and civil associations. As the name implies, the Committee's chief function could be coordination, but it should not preclude setting standards, mobilizing resources, forming partnerships, implementing

programmes and projects, and facilitating information exchange within and between countries and between Governments and non-governmental organizations;

(c) Strengthening organizations of disabled persons, particularly their resource base, organizational skills and participation in decision-making. Governments may wish to consider providing those organizations with facilities, equipment and an operational budget in view of the fact that they are expected to be at the leading edge of change concerning the status of disabled persons and the transformation of social values, attitudes and practices required in achieving a society for all;

(d) Establishing partnerships, including among non-traditional partners. Certain sectors can effect change and produce well-defined benefits. For example, the media can influence values and attitudes. The business sector can provide opportunities for work. Religious and civil sectors can facilitate participation. Families and communities can provide a benign and encouraging atmosphere. Health and social sector personnel can set up an enabling environment. Sports and leisure organizations can broaden the experience of participation for all concerned. "South-South" and "North-South" partnerships or "twinning" between organizations could lead to effective innovations;

(e) Integrating disability issues into national policies pertaining to the greater society. This should be done in a natural way at the planning stage of all policies, programmes and projects in all countries. Such integration is particularly important where resources are scarce, as in developing countries and those in transition from central planning;

(f) Setting standards is an ongoing process pertaining to human rights, life-style, services and products. Standards should seek to ensure that patterns of behaviour and design of services and products are non-harmful over time for all citizens. Standards can be set in legislation and policy guidelines. Countries that already have comprehensive legislation may need to focus on reaching the established standards by educating and persuading the broad public, employers, service providers and others;

(g) Generating awareness of the lives, experiences, talents and contributions of disabled persons in an integrated setting is important for providing disabled persons with highly visible role models and for changing negative stereotyping of disabled persons by the media where this happens;

(h) Mobilizing resources, which may go beyond monetary resources to encompass, for example, such assets as family and community solidarity and goodwill, teamwork and leadership skills, knowledge and technology (data banks, manuals, etc.), infrastructure and organization, alliances and partnerships, add-on possibilities to broad-based communal programmes and skills developed within organizations of disabled persons, including for technical cooperation and fund-raising;

(i) Decentralizing programme implementation, including responsibility and resources, in order to ensure appropriateness of actions and to build up local capabilities. The final choice of options should rest with end-users with, if necessary, the assistance of a professional or guardian;

(j) Monitoring and evaluating progress should be undertaken simultaneously for both the medium-term plan and the Long-term Strategy, as discussed below in chapter IV, section C. Monitoring of the medium-term plan could be guided by the targets.

3. Perspective plan for 2002-2007

23. Building on the knowledge, experience and momentum generated during the first medium-term plan and a critique of its achievements, a plan for the years 2002 to 2007 should aim to achieve more. Its targets could be bolder, moving closer to the society for all, yet not losing sight of prevailing realities.

B. Regional and global support

24. Regional and international support can assist countries in becoming self-sufficient, on setting standards, on facilitating exchange of information and experience and on promoting, where applicable, participation of disabled persons' organizations in decision-making and of disabled persons in programme implementation.

1. Regional measures

25. Regional organizations are well positioned to facilitate the adaptation and transfer of global approaches, standards and technology to the specific needs and options of the region. During the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, some regions were very active, others less so. Inaction has been attributed to wars, political instability and economic constraints.

26. Within the Long-term Strategy, regional organizations are invited:

(a) To review their socio-economic policies, programmes and projects to determine the extent to which they address the needs, rights and concerns of people with disabilities;

(b) To develop a disability component in their socio-economic policies, programmes and projects;

(c) To develop or update regional strategies concerning disability, in consultation with organizations of disabled persons;

(d) To improve exchange of information and experience by organizing conferences, workshops and task forces to address specific issues of disability, including adaptation of the Standard Rules;

(e) To consider the feasibility of convening a broad-based regional forum at which to develop or refine a regional long-term strategy with interim five-year plans commencing with the years 1997-2002;

(f) To support national plans.

2. Global measures

27. Global organizations can support regional and national initiatives for reaching the society for all, guided by policies and programmes of the United Nations system. Global policies should be continually refined on the basis of regional and national experience. Specifically, international organizations are invited:

- (a) To support regional and national plans;
- (b) To consult with organizations of disabled persons when developing or revising a wide range of socio-economic policies, programmes and events such as international conferences, special anniversaries or observances;
- (c) To promote human rights, health, hygiene, food, education, rehabilitation, employment and shelter for all, in keeping with their mandates;
- (d) To integrate a well-defined disability component into their socio-economic policies and programmes, including technical cooperation and public information;
- (e) To utilize the expertise of disabled persons among their administrative and project staff;
- (f) To improve exchange of information among international organizations as well as between donors, policy-makers and implementing agencies;
- (g) To produce instructive materials and information on successful programmes;
- (h) To examine the feasibility of initiating a joint model project with the aim of assisting a limited number of interested Governments in designing a comprehensive disability policy that could be tested and, in time, serve as a practical model for replication or adaptation in other countries;
- (i) To review and revise plans and procedures every five years in order to integrate in them disability issues and an active participation by disabled persons.

C. Monitoring and evaluation

28. As is evident from the preceding sections, monitoring and evaluation of the Long-term Strategy needs to be considered from two perspectives: national data disaggregated in terms of geographical location, gender, socio-economic characteristics or programmatic activity, and aggregated national-level data in terms of regional or global measures.

29. An essential first task is selection of variables and indicators of performance in terms of achievements and obstacles encountered. Indicators should be clear, unambiguous, accurate and explain variations in performance and results. Monitoring indicators will focus on input delivery and use; evaluation indicators focus on results attained and observed changes among intended beneficiaries.

30. Monitoring should occur periodically and reports should coincide with annual plan and budget reviews. This will provide an empirical basis for assessing and instituting necessary adjustments in targets and activities. Monitoring activities of the United Nations system, including the work of the Special Rapporteur for the Standard Rules, represent important sources of collateral input to monitoring the Long-term Strategy.

31. Evaluation findings should be produced so that they can coincide with quinquennial reviews of implementation of the World Programme scheduled for 1997, 2002 and 2007. This will provide a sound basis for identification, review and assessment of salient issues, trends and specific areas of need.

32. Organizations of people with disabilities should be appropriately involved in identification of suitable measures of progress and obstacles, analysis of findings and interpretation of results.

33. National-level monitoring is the core activity in the monitoring and evaluation of the Long-term Strategy. This can be carried out either by a specially designated body or organization, such as a national coordinating committee on disability, or in connection with ongoing procedures to survey national socio-economic trends. Monitoring reports should be organized as an integral part of national assessments of socio-economic performance to ensure that monitoring findings and recommendations are effectively reflected in decisions taken on development policies, programmes and projects.

34. Regional-level monitoring would build upon national-level findings. A number of regional bodies and organizations are concerned with disability issues, which include the regional commissions of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States and the Nordic Council. It is necessary to identify measures that are both consistent among national settings and capable of aggregation at supranational level.

35. Monitoring of global instruments and conventions in the social and economic fields can provide important contextual indicators for monitoring the Long-term Strategy. Conversely, that process could also be used to integrate disability concerns in mainstream development.
