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Accelerating Disability-Inclusive Social Protection in Asia-Pacific

Insights, Synthesis, and Strategic Pathways

UNCRPD Article 4 — active involvement of persons with disabilities through representative organizations (OPDs)

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Regional Landscape: Successes, Gaps & Challenges

Workshop findings: progress is visible, but coverage, adequacy, data and enforcement remain uneven.

UNCRPD Article 28
Social Protection

Successes recorded

Expanded benefits

Disability cash allowances and inclusive health coverage are scaling in several countries.

Pilots and tools

Employment guidebooks and shock-responsive social protection pilots create useful entry points.

Gaps & challenges

Inadequate benefits

Allowance levels do not keep pace with real cost of living and extra disability expenses.

Systemic barriers

Weak disaggregated data, inaccessible rehabilitation / AT, and limited legal enforcement.

Limited OPD capacity

Local OPDs need direct funding to support community-based delivery and feedback loops.



Key message

Progress must become adequate, enforceable, and accessible at community level.

Cash Benefits & Care Systems: “Cash Plus” Approach

Cash transfers work best when combined with care, health, assistive technology and economic inclusion.



Adequate cash

Benefit levels reflect disability severity and extra costs.

Care & health

Community-based care, health insurance and independent living support.

UNCRPD Articles 19 & 20
Independent Living + Mobility

In-kind & AT

Assistive technology, goods and accessible rehabilitation.

Cash
Plus

TVET & work

Inclusive education, skills, jobs and youth-led SME registration.

Cash is not sufficient on its own — connect benefits to systems that improve daily mobility, autonomy and livelihoods.

Sustainable Budgeting & Meaningful OPD Engagement

Financing must move from paper allocations to effective access and structural OPD partnership.



UNCRPD Articles 4.3 & 32
Participation + Cooperation

Tokenistic engagement

Visibility without decision-making power.

Consultation

Voice in discussions and feedback on decisions.

Co-design & governance

Formal seats, clear roles and shared accountability.

Effective access over allocations

Use budget planning to guarantee actual accessibility — portals, offices, payments, transport and outreach.

Engage Ministries of Finance

Work with World Bank / ADB and national budget actors to make disability inclusion a binding commitment.

Direct investment in OPDs

Sustained technical and financial support makes meaningful participation possible.

Actionable Pathways for Policy Makers & Partners

A strategic sequence: stronger laws, portable systems, accessible delivery and direct youth OPD resourcing.

1. Decentralize services

Community access points, assisted/offline options and OPD navigation.

2. Strengthen legislation

Enforce non-discriminatory laws and complaint mechanisms.

3. Harmonize systems

Advance bilateral SSAs and benefit exportability across ASEAN.

UNCRPD Articles 9 & 28
Accessibility + Social Protection



Image fit: youth-led public action and collective visibility

Way forward: mainstream inclusive practices in government systems — not as parallel projects.

4. Resource youth OPDs

Sustained funding for outreach, monitoring and local evidence.

Building a Resilient, Inclusive, and Portable ASEAN



“Social protection is not charity — it is a human right. Real impact requires moving from cash handouts to comprehensive Cash Plus systems co-designed by persons with disabilities.”

Thank you