**Written Submission for General Comment on Persons with Disabilities in Situations of Risk and Humanitarian Emergencies**

**(Submission can be published on the OHCHR website for the day of general discussion)**

**DPI-Japan**

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DPI -Japan, as cross-disability self-help organization, has helped and supported persons with disabilities in following times of big disasters.

1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, Japan

1999 Chi-Chi Earthquake, Taiwan

2004 Sumatra Earthquake, Thailand

2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, Japan

2013 Typhoon Yolanda, Philippines

2016 Kumamoto earthquake, Japan

The comments are based on the lessons learned from past national and international major earthquakes as persons with disabilities

A points of concern

* In the event of a disaster, the environment that many people had previously created through advocacy can easily revert to a society with a lot of barriers. People who are vulnerable on a daily basis, especially women with disabilities and other people with multiple difficulties, are unable to speak out in an emergency.
* There is a need for the government to collect information not only on persons with disabilities who routinely receive services, but also on persons with disabilities who are not eligible for services or who need services but cannot supply and demand them for some reason.
* Local temporary shelters must be universal, including in terms of building structures and provision of relief supplies. In particular, municipal staff and volunteers need training in understanding disability and gender diversity in order to provide appropriate and reasonable support to people with disabilities
* As the government tends to prioritize support to those without disabilities over those with disabilities, disabled persons' organisations should set up relief centres and carry out activities to dispatch carers, commuters and other persons with disabilities to disaster victims. The centres should respond to the various needs of the affected disabled and operate 24 hours a day.
* In disaster prevention and mitigation related to women with disabilities, it is crucial that gender policies in both ordinary and emergency situations include and acknowledge the challenges and needs of women with disabilities. Furthermore, it is necessary to ensure the participation of women with disabilities in national and local government committees where disaster prevention and mitigation plans are discussed. Imagination and flexibility towards diversity is the key to disaster prevention and mitigation for people with diversity, including women and girls with disabilities.

B case studies

Many people chose to stay in their cars rather than in shelters or damaged homes.

・After the earthquake, I went to the shelter at the nearest local government office, but it was packed with people and the staff did not help me. I decided that I could not safely use the disabled toilet in my wheelchair or that it would be unsanitary, so I had to return home amidst continuing aftershocks.

・I could not take out medications, orthotics and emergency supplies. It was difficult to obtain. Lack of supplies made shopping and petrol refuelling difficult. It was difficult to obtain medicines and oxygen. Electricity and gas were cut off and lighting, heating and medical equipment were not available. Mobile phones were out of service.

・My daughter has intellectual disability. She was almost sexually victimised while I was away from her in a shelter for the distribution of commodities. In extraordinary circumstances, women, girls and children with disabilities are at high risk of sexual victimisation. Medications, braces and emergency supplies were not taken out of the house and were difficult to obtain

・I have psycho-social disability and am raising two autistic children. After the Kumamoto earthquake, my health condition became severe.

・The earthquake caused the closure of nursery schools, making it difficult to look after the children. It was difficult to receive support due to limited support providers, Supporters did not come and consult with us and we could not get information.

・Power outages made it difficult to gather information and make a living.。

C measures to cope with disability

・Shelter, temporary housing and other services should be available, disability-inclusive and age- and gender-inclusive.

・Ensure the exercise of the right to privacy and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities in dangerous situations and humanitarian emergencies, and implement reasonable care in relation to disaster prevention and mitigation

・Establish a basic law on disaster management.

・Ensure that all persons with disabilities and their families have access to the information they need in accessible formats and by appropriate equipment。

・Ensure that the following goods are made available to persons with disabilities if they are in short supply."

Medical supplies such as medicines, pads, batteries, special diets, lightweight manual wheelchairs for back-up, converters for communication devices, communication boards such as handwriting, adapter kits for ventilators

D disaster prevention

・Increase disaster prevention literacy and promote understanding of hazards

Gather information about potential hazards in the area where you live. Ask your workplace or school about their emergency plans and ensure that they include people with disabilities. This includes plans in schools and workplaces

・Preparation of disaster care plans by the government

Disaster prevention and mitigation plans at the national and local level should be prepared together with persons with disabilities and involve the entire population to build resilient communities. An 'Individual Emergency Support Plan' should be made based on key points such as assembly points, evacuation centres and safe and accessible evacuation routes in the area. And it is necessary to ensure the participation of women with disabilities in the committees where disaster prevention and mitigation plans are discussed, and to provide for diversity and flexibility. In particular, disaster management plans, strategies and policies in climate change under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction 2015-2030 should also be developed with persons with disabilities to ensure that they address the individual needs of persons with disabilities in all forms of risk.

・Participate in community evacuation drills

It should be checked whether the municipality provides an emergency list for self-identification as a person with special needs in an emergency, and whether it covers vulnerable communities such as people with disabilities as well as the elderly, children, people who cannot understand local language and pregnant women.

・Establishing a system for the provision of reasonable accommodation in normal times

If persons with disabilities have equal access to health services and other economic and social support programmes in normal times, the response to sudden outbreaks of infectious diseases and treatment planning can also be disability-inclusive. Ensuring that measures are in place to de-institutionalize persons with disabilities and that appropriate support is provided to enable them to live in the community even in emergencies.

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