

## Education to Employment

### Youth with disabilities and their needs post COVID-19

WEBINAR: 3 Dec 2020 | 14:00 – 15:30 (Bangkok Time) via Zoom

## International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2020 Webinar

### “Education to employment – Youth with disabilities and their needs post COVID-19”

Thursday, 3 December, 14:00 – 15:30 (UTC+7)

#### Concept Note

#### Background

The transition from education to employment is one of the most essential life event for all young people, including youth with disabilities. Approximately 15 per cent of the world’s population live with some form of disability<sup>1</sup> and an estimated 690 million persons with disabilities<sup>2</sup> are in Asia and the Pacific region. The majority of these young people, some 150 million (80%), live in the developing world.<sup>3</sup>

Despite many benefits of inclusive education, segregated models of education delivery are the most prevalent practice in Asia and the Pacific. This practice is rooted in social stigma and discrimination against children with disabilities leaving more than 190 million of children with disabilities<sup>4</sup> isolated from the school community and quality learning.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining a continuum of support beyond school and into employment requires inclusion of transition planning. Transition from school to work is about choices, career options, living and social arrangements, and economic decisions that may have lifelong consequences. For persons with disabilities this kind of transition is often very difficult, due to several limitations imposed by stigma against disability and the complexity of services intended to support this transition. Coming to the job market with little education and few or no skills, some differently abled people have difficulty competing. For some, specific physical or intellectual differences may further limit their job options. For most, a biased mindset makes employers hesitant to hire them.

In this background, the webinar is being organized on the 3rd of December to mark the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD 2020). It will aim to bring forward and highlight this critical area, which is pivotal in ensuring that the existing gap between education and employment can be addressed meaningfully in alignment with IDPD 2020 theme “Building Back Better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 world”. The event will host five young individuals with disabilities, from across the Asia-Pacific region, to discuss challenges and additional needs in terms of accessing employment opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization (WHO), 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Includes those with physical disabilities, those who are blind or experience low vision, deaf or hard-of-hearing, and those with learning disabilities, cognitive/developmental disabilities, psychosocial disabilities, deafblind, and those with multiple disabilities.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations. Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, Statistical Office. Disability Statistics Compendium. Statistics on Special Population Groups, Series Y, No. 4, New York, 1990.

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF, 2015.

The following questions will be addressed during the webinar:

- 1) What are the major challenges faced in school? What are their needs in order to reduce the achievement gap between children with disabilities and their peers?
- 2) How do these challenges impact future employment opportunities for youth with disabilities?
- 3) What have been the main issues and concerns for job seekers with disabilities? What has worked well to ensure consideration for interviews and to secure employment?
- 4) What are the risk mitigation measures to ensure youth with disabilities stay employed?
- 5) What practical actions can be taken in the short, medium, and long term to enable youth with disabilities to acquire the right skills and the right jobs, post COVID-19? To be financially independent, what measures can be helpful?

The answers to these questions will make an important contribution to develop relevant and targeted strategies in building a more inclusive and equitable society which facilitates employment opportunities for youth with disabilities.

### **Objectives:**

- 1) To share experiences and perspectives of the transitioning period, from education to employment from youths with disabilities.
- 2) To share examples of good practices and successful disability inclusive policy to support the transition period.
- 3) To propose suggestions on specific actions that can be taken to support youths with disabilities to acquire the right skills and to secure a right position in the labor market and mitigate the risks associated with financial insecurity.

### **Audience:**

The audience for the webinar will be regional and national level education stakeholders including UNESCO, UNICEF, Civil Society Organisations, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), donor agencies and policy makers.

### **Working Language**

English will be the working language of the webinar.

### **Dates and format**

Dates: 3 December 2020

Time: 14.00 – 15.30 (Bangkok time)

Format: Via Zoom (link will be provided upon registration)

Registration link: [https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_zGtln3fhTYuz1viGzGjk4Q](https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_zGtln3fhTYuz1viGzGjk4Q)

### **For more information, please contact**

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## Agenda

Thursday, 3 December 2020	
14:00 – 14:10	<p><b>Welcome and introduction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nyi Nyi Thaung</b>, Acting Chief of Section for Inclusive Quality Education, UNESCO Bangkok</li> <li>• <b>Barkha Henry</b>, Regional Manager, Programme Development &amp; Resourcing, Leonard Cheshire EAPRO</li> <li>• Video Launch (5 min)</li> </ul>
14.10 – 14:15	<p><b>Keynote:</b> Perspective on the importance of the transition period, from school to work for youth with disabilities in Asia Pacific.</p> <p><b>Felix Weidenkaff</b> Employment Specialist International Labour Organization (ILO), Decent Work Team for East and South-East Asia &amp; Pacific</p>
14:15 – 15:00	<p><b>Panel discussion (Youth with Disabilities Representatives)</b> Moderator: <b>Kevin Paul Palaca</b>, volunteer at Leonard Cheshire Disability Philippines Foundation Inc.</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fiji</b> - Leslie Tikotikoca, Coordinator for the Access to Justice Program for persons living with disability for the Fiji Disabled Peoples Federation</li> <li>• <b>Fiji</b> - Krishneer Sen, World Federation of the Deaf Oceania President and former UNICEF Pacific Ambassador</li> <li>• <b>Indonesia</b> - Abi Marutama, Human Rights Analyst at the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of Indonesia</li> <li>• <b>Thailand</b> - Thithiporn Prawatsrichai, Youth Lead Advocate, Leonard Cheshire</li> <li>• <b>Philippines</b> - Kean Ofamin, Accenture Digital Access Team, General Santos</li> <li>• <b>Vietnam</b> - Vu Thi Quyen, Co-Founder and General Manager of We-Edit</li> </ul>
15:00 – 15:20	Q&A and Reflections
15:20 – 15:30	<p><b>Summary, Key Messages and Closing:</b></p> <p><b>Maria Qureshi</b> Education Specialist UNICEF - EAPRO</p>