

# Training Manual on the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities



The participation of the organizations  
of people with disabilities and their families  
in the process of ratifying, monitoring and implementing  
the United Nations Convention  
on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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## THE ASSOCIATIONS WHO EDITED THE PRESENT MANUAL

### Disabled Peoples' International – DPI Italia Onlus

DPI Italia Onlus is the Italian section of the International NGO “Disabled People’s International”. It was founded on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1994 and it is made up of 18 Italian Organisations, involved in the protection and promotion of the human and civil rights of people with disability and their families, and of single members.

#### **DPI Italia works to achieve the following goals:**

- a. Guarantee the safeguarding of human and civil rights of people with disability, according to the principles of non discrimination and equal opportunities (art. 21 and 26 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union);
- b. Support the self promotion of people with disability in all processes and issues (familiar, social, economic and political) concerning themselves;
- c. Favour the achievement of autonomous, self-determined, independent and interdependent life of people with disability and promote equal opportunities, according to the Standard Rules of the UN;
- d. Enhance the resources of the associations that are members of the networks, sustaining the sharing of activities, instruments as well as the research and planning skills each Association possesses;
- e. Promote the vision of disability as an ordinary human diversity and favour relationships of inter-dependence, and the reciprocity of the growth processes on every level: natural, human, civil and cultural.

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## Italian Association Amici di Raoul Follereau – AIFO

The Italian Association Amici di Raoul Follereau is a Non-Governmental Organisation working in the field of International Health Co-operation, official partner of World Health Organisation. AIFO is present in 25 Countries in Africa, Asia and South America, with 130 project of Health Co-operation. AIFO draws inspiration from the message of justice and love of the French journalist Raoul Follereau, who committed all his life against the social stigma and the physical disability caused by leprosy (Hansen disease).

Abroad, AIFO supports projects related to the treatment and care of leprosy and Primary Health Care; projects for and with people with disabilities, adopting the strategies of Community Based Rehabilitation and of empowerment of people with disabilities; projects for childhood. All the initiatives promoted abroad aim at self-development and at sustainability, through the active participation and decisions of the beneficiaries themselves. In Italy, AIFO carries out information campaigns and activities of education to development.

*To build the civilisation of Love starting from the Poorest:* this is the huge commitment that AIFO volunteers achieve without discrimination of belief or culture.

The project supported by AIFO have the following characteristics:

*Development projects.* AIFO promotes projects towards the creation of stable development conditions and improvement of life quality standards. It implements emergency actions only in the case where there are already well-established partnerships which may guarantee a positive impact.

*Enhancement the local resources.* AIFO supports local projects and capacities. It supports training courses of local personnel for giving sustainability. It collaborates actively with institutions and local associations.

Community development. The community is the resource on which AIFO invests the most, spurring the solidarity between the members and giving them the abilities that enable them to become resource for disadvantaged groups. Primary Health Care and Community Based Rehabilitation are the favourite approaches of AIFO, both characterised on the enhancement of the role of community.

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# Contents

Project background

Foreword

Introduction

Methodological Note on Training

Key Training Concepts

The Condition of People with Disabilities

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DPOs in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

A National Strategy to Support and Participate in the Process of Ratifying the Convention

Annexes

## Project background

The present project is the result of a long presence of AIFO – Associazione Italiana Amici di Raoul Follereau - in Mongolia and its collaboration with Ministry of Health, the National Rehabilitation Centre for people with disabilities and the National Federation of DPOs. The first feasibility study in Mongolia was held in 1991 by AIFO; between 1992 and 1996, AIFO held training courses for trainers at National level on CBR strategies and elaborated ways of adaptation in Mongolian specific context. Between 1997 and 2001, CBR project covered 50 % of the total populations, which means 11 provinces in the west part of Mongolia out of 21 provinces and Ulaanbaatar 6 districts. Between 2001 and 2005, CBR project reached all the 12 provinces of the western part of Mongolia, including Bayan-Ulgii province (Kazak minority) and Nalaih and Baganuur districts within Ulaan Bataar, the capital city. In the present phase, the project focuses on organising the communities and empowering people with disabilities and organisation of people with disabilities. The project was discussed and plan of actions were elaborated together with the local partner, collaborators to ensure involvement and full sharing of decision making.

Since the beginning of its presence in Mongolia, AIFO has been paying special attention to strengthen the capacity building of the Organisations of People with disabilities – DPOs and the National Federation. Moreover, in 2005, AIFO supported a project implemented jointly with the Federation on “Disability Amendments in the existing laws of Mongolia” in collaboration with the local NGO<sup>1</sup> “Consensus”. The working group, formed by lawyers and members of the Mongolian Federation of DPOs, analyzed more than 20 existing laws and the latest version of *Draft Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities*. The Disability Amendments were presented to the 2005 Autumn session of the Great Ih Hural, the Parliament of Mongolia. After the approval of United Nations *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities*, the amendments were modified and updated and finally they will be discussed during the Parliament spring session of 2007.

The main objective of the present project was to improve the skills of the National Federation of DPOs in Mongolia and the partner organizations in

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<sup>1</sup> *Consensus/Lobby Center/NGO is a non-governmental, non-party and non-profit organization. Its mission is: the promotion of new mechanism of cooperation between main political stakeholders; the achievement of political consensus in favor to the essential interest of people of Mongolia; the encouragement of mechanism of direct democracy supporting citizens' participation in the public governance and combating corruption.*

*The adopted strategy is: establishing a “Lobby Center”, promoting a lobbying system and human rights and legal literacy, producing legal and political researches and policy documents on priority issues such as gender, human rights, corruption, laws.*

promoting and defending the rights of persons with disabilities. As a result of the project, firstly the Federation was strengthened with well-educated human resources, who are better aware of human rights and better advocate the rights of persons with disabilities at the political level, pushing the Human Right approach in legislation and supporting new legislation based on the UN Convention approach. Secondly, the Federation's organizational and managerial capacity improved through different subjects of training. Therefore, the capacity building process was strengthened and the Federation helped to become a more dynamic and self-reliant organization at the end of the project implementation.

The training courses organised set out in two levels: one theoretical on Human Rights approach through cascade training, and technical level on Management field, computer skills and English language.

The increasing demand of people with disabilities to obtain a role in decision making and precise responsibilities brought to a self consciousness of the need of further training, on technical and managerial issues, as well as on the empowering process based on human rights strategy. The present "Training manual on the human rights of people with disabilities" is the result of the perceived needs and analysis of the situation of the organizations of people with disabilities in Mongolia. The starting idea was to get a training manual flexible and constructed in modules, to be used in the different Countries of the world, in different cultural, social, political and economic backgrounds and actual contexts. It is mainly addressed to the participation of the organizations of people with disabilities and their families in the process of ratification, monitoring and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the rights of people with disabilities.



## Foreword

Two thousand and five hundred years ago, when the young prince Siddhartha, secretly slipping out of his father's palace, discovered illness, old age and death, he definitely met also disability. His choice to devote his whole life searching the way to eliminate the pain, becoming the Buddha, he affirmed the right of each one to get free from suffering for ever.

In this process, with regards either to persons with disabilities as well as every human being, essential requirements are some abilities like: capability to make communities recognise and declare specific and universal human rights and to know how to make them due; to know how to identify new rights, rewriting the existing ones.

This is a belief that AIFO acquired and that comes from leprosy millenary history. It is not enough to treat this illness, neither to recover from it. Once it is contracted you live a double condition: *you have leprosy* and *you are a leper*, which is, signed by a mark which socially marginalizes and excludes from the community.

Likewise, in the present world, *a person out of ten has a disability and is also disabled*. Thanks to old and new technologies, it has not been difficult to find any technical remedy to avoid the functional consequences of disability. Much more difficult is to remove the debarring stigma which maliciously flutters around every disable person. This is a different issue from the needs of medical, surgical or prosthetic correction: the fundamental rights of human beings are here involved. It is for this reason that I like to think that Janraisig, the bodhisattva of compassion, and the saviour goddess Tara would appreciate the offer of this manual.

It is a happy coincidence that this Manual, carried out with the financial contribution of UNO, sees the light few months after the approval of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. For the work (background) from which it comes and for its operational stances which it contains, it is an extraordinary example of implementation of the spirit of the Convention itself.

It is the result of decisive convergence of the participation of persons with disabilities, their families and their organisations, and of the receptiveness towards change of the Mongolian Government and institutions.

This is a Manual of active citizenship, exemplary product of a bottom-up capacity building, not only theoretical but concrete, in the field of the rights of persons with disability in Mongolia. Its foundations lay on the recognition of the intrinsic dignity of every human being, and extraordinary value of every person in his/her way of being alive.

Besides, the organized and conscious action of persons with disabilities in Mongolia shows the huge value of the knowledge that every persons with disability has with regards to his/her own life condition.

Thanks to the achieved empowerment, persons with disabilities acquired on the field the status of experts of their own condition and are consequently and obviously trainers.

Therefore, it is not only a question to implement computer science or English language or management or international law courses. There is something more. Through training courses set out with the support of DPI and AIFO, it was set in motion a recursive process which produces new empowerment, new critic consciousness, new knowledge, new capabilities on human rights, to be used for every human being.

In this way persons with disabilities, who previously were the stones rejected by the builders of society, have now become the capstone in the building of a democratic Mongolia and of solidarity, equality and freedom.

Therefore, the national symbol of Mongolia, the Soyombo conceived by Zanabazar, among its many meanings, may in this way enumerate also the freedom, dignity and autonomy of persons with disability.

The Manual is of course a tool for new concrete goals, for the wellbeing of the last, which, according to the theory of justice of John Rawls, constitutes an essential parameter of the civilization of a society.

It is necessary to make fundamental rights and available resources distributed in the most possible equal way, avoiding inequalities. As Rawls does, we however admit a positive inequality, an exception of justice to the formal equity.

When you work in favour of those who are in concrete disadvantaged conditions, it is necessary to fill the gap of opportunities in order to reduce this disadvantage. It is not right to make equal parts among unequals.

For this reason, AIFO is deeply engaged to make international cooperation integrate the knowledge of disable condition in each project of intervention, appreciating the human meeting on an equal footing, among faces that look at each other and recognise them a value itself original and unalienable.

It is a concern of active love, of political non-violent love, to which we invite each reader or user of this Manual.

Francesco Colizzi

President

Associazione Italiana Amici di Raoul Follereau - AIFO

# Introduction

The adoption in the United Nations of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 13 December 2006 is the culmination of years of struggles by members of the global community of persons with disabilities for the recognition and respect of their rights. This is an initiative which members of the disability movement have worked so hard over decades, to achieve. The work for the convention has witnessed how the global movement of persons with disabilities has set aside their individual issues in favor of uniting to speak with one common voice to demonstrate their commonality of issues, including the day-to-day experience of discrimination which many persons with disabilities are subjected to. Such experience of discrimination has unified disabled persons to fight for disability rights to be recognized as human rights. Today, we celebrate the signing of the treaty by over a hundred member-states of the United Nations and the ratification of the same by 2 countries as of July 2007. But it is not right to assume that the work is done. In fact, it has just begun. The Convention indeed is a strong tool that can bring about change nationally and internationally. It can facilitate creation of a level playing field that equalizes opportunities and thereby help build better lives for all persons with disabilities and their families. It can likewise serve to hasten the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the life and activities of their communities wherever in the world they live. Disability rights as human rights are an issue whose time has finally come.

As many of us are aware of, our colleagues with disabilities in many developing countries are not even aware that they have rights. Many persons with disabilities need to be assisted in understanding what the Convention means and how it can be used as a tool to improve their own situation in the countries where they live. It is in this light that I wish to congratulate and commend the initiative of the DPI-Italy which has produced a training manual through the support of AIFO and UNDESA, to help persons with disabilities in developing countries understand what are human rights as applied in the context of disability and how to use the Convention as an effective tool for them to get their governments address the many issues that have contributed to the economic deprivation, isolation and marginalization of the poorest persons with disabilities the world over.

As has been said repeatedly, disabled persons are the experts of their own situation. Nothing about us, without us.

Venus M. Ilagan  
Chairperson  
Disabled Peoples' International  
World Council

## **Methodological Note on Training**

Training for a specific goal, in this case to promote the participation of the organizations of people with disabilities in the decision-making processes that affect their lives, requires particular attention to the local situation, the cultural context, the level of ability and awareness of the organizations and their leaders, the available technology and the disability policies of the country involved.

This means that we cannot have a one-size-fits-all intervention model, but must personalize the course as much as possible. Cultures and socioeconomic, political and social situations shall be kept in mind and the suggestions of experts and DPOs collected through specific preparation. It is important to use appropriate language that is understandable by the course participants, to be familiar with the country's situation and to judge the level of dialogue with local and national authorities achieved by the organizations of people with disabilities, in order to identify realistic and achievable goals.

Given the nature of the training it would be preferable to use trainers and experts from the same world of the organizations of people with disabilities. Indeed, this would reinforce the contents of the lessons by offering role models that could stimulate course participants to identify with a real leadership. This also applies to the parts of the course concerning the national situation in the country in which the course is carried out.

This choice will also allow the trainers to use not just a traditional teacher-centred education model, but also lessons involving cooperative learning activities and group peer counselling-type exercises. The lessons will therefore aim to bring out the lived experiences of the course participants by building on the methods of working and action used in their country. Moreover, as these techniques are particularly effective at an individual level, but delicate in group activities, appropriate pedagogical tools should be used to facilitate interpersonal and cooperative communication and participation in the training activities. In this regard exercises in subgroups, simulations and pedagogical tools based on cooperative activities are useful.

Another factor to bear in consideration is the possibility of transferring training from the centre outwards. In this regard, it would be useful to provide for two levels of training: the first central level involving the national leaders of organizations of people with disabilities and their families and other persons, who have the responsibility for passing on the training received from the national to the local level (especially in rural areas where often not much information reaches). It seems appropriate in this regard to identify some prerequisite abilities for potential trainers. The second training level can consist of more or less simplified training modules, to be worked out based on the various welfare and skills systems delegated to local authorities, aimed at local DPO leaders and their families. It is important to homogenize the skills of the local and national associations through a human rights-based approach.

## Legend

The text includes sentences taken from some of the fundamental international documents for a human rights-based approach to disability. In order to identify the origins of the quotations in the text the reader should note that:

- quotations from the text of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) refer, in round brackets, to the Preamble with the relevant Point, e.g. (Preamble Point t), to the Articles with the relevant number, e.g. (Art. 5), and to the Articles of the Optional Protocol with the relevant number e.g. (Protocol Art. 6); the same applies for references to this Convention without direct quotations in the text;
- quotations from the text of the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993) carry, again in round brackets, the label Standard Rules, e.g. (Standard Rules);
- references to other sections of the manual are indicated by the section number in round brackets, e.g. (see section 3.2.3).

Quotations from the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities refer to the official texts.