**

Questionnaire on the provision of support to persons with disabilities

1. ***Please provide information on the following services that are available for persons with disabilities in your country, including data on their coverage, geographic distribution and delivery arrangements, funding and sustainability, challenges and shortcoming in their implementation:***

Ministry of Family and Social Policy (ASPB) aims to provide appropriate support and services for persons with disabilities and elderly people in the light of “Human First” principle and “Universal Human Rights” approach and by means of producing comprehensive, permanent and modern solutions in line with international documents. In provision of all services, the Ministry takes a stand against all types of discriminative actions and outdated understandings.

Within this scope, the social services provided under authority and responsibility of General Directorate of Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly (EYHGM) are as follows;

**Care Services for Persons with Disabilities**

Institutional care services in Turkey have recently started to transform in parallel with the approach of "community based care". Within this context, Barrier Free Life Centers that provide institutional care service and living environments to persons with disabilities (PwDs) in need of care in single floor houses with gardens for 10 to 12 persons and Hope Homes that aim for ensuring active participation to social life by means of providing care services to small groups of PwDs in apartment houses have been put into service since 2006.

The primary goal of care services is to ensure that persons in need of special care are provided with necessary service at their homes and social environments while accompanied by their family members and to give financial support to families. Within this scope, the following social support services are rendered;

**Home Care Allowance:** For persons with disabilities who receive care by their relatives at home, net minimum wage is paid to the person offering care, under the framework of home care services. Since the person providing care is a relative and lives with the disabled person under the same roof, it is considered that the minimum wage paid constitutes a reliable contribution for the family income. As per December 2015 data, 508.481 persons receive financial support within the scope of home care services.

With the purpose of supporting “Home Care Services”, citizens who cannot benefit from care services are provided with the support of professional care workers. Besides, Foster Parents volunteering to take over care of children in need of care support can adopt children.

**Home Care Support:** If families of persons with disabilities need support in terms of delivery of care, care personnel of public care centers go to their residence and provide half time service. By September 2016, 30 families and persons with disabilities benefited from this service.

**Care for Temporary Visitors and Guests:** This is a new service model which includes provision of care service free of charge to a person with disability whose family members cannot deliver care to him/her as they have to travel to another city or country with the purposes of a vacation or health care etc.

In such cases, persons with disabilities can stay and receive care in public care institutions for a maximum of 30 days per year. All needs of persons with disabilities are covered by the institution during this period. As per September 2016 data, 303 persons with disabilities benefit from this service.

**Day Care Services:** Along with the residential care and rehabilitation centers affiliated with the Ministry, there are also Rehabilitation and Family Consulting Centers that provide day service for out-patients. These centers, providing either half day or full day service, combine rehabilitation and care services for individuals or groups and also provide consultancy service for families - especially for mothers of persons with disabilities. These centers are established nationwide on demand. By September 2016, there are 6 centers that render service to 411 persons with disabilities.

**Public Institutions:**

**Care and Rehabilitation Centers:** Care and Rehabilitation Centers are social services institutions established to make up for the loss of function of those persons who cannot carry out the ordinary requirements of daily life due to their physical, mental, and psychological disabilities, as well as to help them acquire skills which would render them self-sufficient in the society, and to provide permanent care for those who cannot acquire such skills. Persons with disabilities are placed in these centers in categorization by age, sex, or type of disability. By September 2016, 6512 persons with disabilities benefit from 24-hour institutional care in 93 care and rehabilitation centers.

**Barrier Free Life Centers:** Institutional care services of Turkey are in the process of transformation in parallel with the approach of community based care in recent years. Within this scope, the work on establishing principles and standards of care services for PwDs who need personal care has gained acceleration since 2006 with the understanding that services are rendered without prejudice to human dignity. Besides, as the new service models reflecting this transition in institutional care, “Barrier Free Life Centers” have been put into service. The Project "Barrier Free Life Centers" was designed with the purpose of increasing the quality of residential care services in institutions and the number of barrier free care centers. The centers provide institutional care service and living environments to PwDs in need of care in single floor houses with 4 bedrooms and a garden for 12 persons. Currently, there are 31 Barrier Free Life Centers in Turkey.

**Family Consultation and Rehabilitation Centers** offer services for disabled children and their families with a view to helping them to become self-sufficient, preparing them for school, and attaining domestic harmony at home.

**Domestic Social Service Units (Hope Houses):** The Project “Hope Houses” was initiated with the aim of providing care services through active participation to society to PwDs who reside in care and rehabilitation centers and whose conditions are assessed to be suitable for receiving such a service. In line with the aims of the project, persons with disabilities are provided with the opportunity of active participation to social life and receiving care and rehabilitation services. Each house provides service to between four to six persons with disabilities in company with one home care personnel and under supervision of a care professional. Currently, approximately 690 persons with disabilities benefit from care at home environment in 125 Hope Houses.

**Private Care Centers**

Persons in need of special care can also receive daily or institutional service from private care centers operated by natural or private entities and audited by provincial directorates of Ministry of Family and Social Policies. The government pays approximately 2 minimum wages (approx. 750 Euros) to private care centers for 24 hours inpatient care service. By September 2016, the total number of these centers is 159 and 11.724 persons with disabilities benefit from them.

By the end of September 2016, there are 93 public care and rehabilitation centers for persons with disabilities, 6 day care centers in 63 of 81 provinces; and 159 private care centers in 56 provinces.

As per Circular No 2010/20 on Patient Transportation Service, persons who were assessed to receive ambulatory care at regular intervals within a treatment plan are transported from their homes to the healthcare facilities in an accessible transportation vehicle.

Persons with disabilities, when they need physiotherapy and rehabilitation services, can benefit from physical medicine and rehabilitation departments of public hospitals, physiotherapy and rehabilitation hospitals or directly from private centers on rehabilitation and physiotherapy. In line with the *Communication on Implementation of Health Care Services*, the fee of such services provided to PwDs is covered by the Social Security Institution.

With the purposes of diagnosing and intervening disability at the earliest stage as possible, some extra measures have been taken by the Ministry of Health. These measures include extending the scope of free vaccination service, development of medical screening and prevention schemes, free iron reinforcement, promoting breastfeeding and increasing the number of infant friendly schemes and particularly medical programmes aimed at newborns at hospitals.

Accessibility arrangements in hospitals are also being carried out as per provisional Articles 2 and 3 of Turkish Disability Act (TDA) that stipulates the accessibility of public institutions. Circular No 2010/79 of Ministry of Health stipulates that indoor and outdoor environments of hospitals should be accessible by PwDs. The circular also includes measures on providing parking lots and assistance to PwDs during all processes in hospitals, employing a sign language interpreter in hospitals, facilitating transfer of patients with disabilities to other hospitals and holding regular trainings for the personnel of hospitals. Additionally, Circular No. 2010/73-80 of the Ministry puts forward the provision on giving priority to PwDs in polyclinic services.

In provision of medical rehabilitation services in Turkey, informed consent of the beneficiary or his/her legal guardian is received initially. Besides, vocational and social rehabilitation services are provided on a voluntary basis. Persons who want to benefit from such services are supposed to apply to the suppliers.

The right to rehabilitation services in equal terms with all citizens was stipulated by TDA. The Act provides that; training programmes are developed in order to the train the personnel needed in all areas of the rehabilitation and necessary measures are taken for the employment of these personnel and the active and effective participation of the PwDs and their families is essential in all stages of the rehabilitation including decision making, planning, executing and terminating rehabilitation services (Art. 10). In addition, the Decree Law No. 573 on Special Education Services necessitates receiving consent from families in all stages of educational rehabilitation including identification, assessment and placement (Art. 5).

1. ***Please explain how persons with disabilities can access information about the existing services referred to in question one, including referral procedures, eligibility criteria and application requirements.***

Accessibility of information on the services is stipulated by the related provisions of two Regulations of General Directorate on Social Services and Child Protection. The names of the regulations are Regulation on Care, Rehabilitation and Family Consultancy Services for Persons with Disabilities (published on Official Gazette No 27691 of 3 September 2010) and Regulation on Identification of Persons with Disabilities in Need of Care and Specification of Principles of Care Services to be Provided (published on Official Gazette No 26244 of 30 July 2006).

Persons with disabilities can obtain information about the application procedures or conditions of services either by applying to the Provincial Directorates of Ministry of Family and Social Policies or referring to the website of the Ministry. Besides, one of the call centers of the Ministry, Hotline 183 for Social Support, also provides consultancy and guidance on the services. Sign Language users employed at Hotline 183 answer video calls of persons with hearing or speaking disabilities through third generation (3G) compatible mobile phones at line no 0549 381 0 183. The Hotline service covers a short message service (SMS) that facilitates access to information especially for persons with hearing and speaking disabilities.

1. ***Please provide information on the number of certified sign language interpreters and deafblind interpreters available in your country.***

There are currently 60 Turkish Sign Language Interpreters, which passed the entrance exam successfully and received a certification, employed in the central organization and provincial directorates of Ministry of Family and Social Policy.

1. ***Please provide information on the existence of any partnership between State institutions and private service providers (e.g. non-governmental organizations, for-profit service providers) for the provision of support to persons with disabilities.***

* **Project on Preparation of a Rehabilitation Model for Persons with a Diagnosis of Autism:**

As part of this project, designed and put into practice as per 2014-2015 Working Plan signed between General Directorate of Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly and UNICEF Turkey Country Office, academicians from Anadolu University trained the staff working with persons with disabilities. Also training materials that can be referred to as a guide were prepared, published and disseminated.

* **Coordination of Youth Camps:**

The Ministry of Family and Social Policies has been in close cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and thus a certain quota has been assigned for children and youth with disabilities at summer camps. General Directorate of Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly is the unit responsible for coordination of the appropriation process.

1. ***Please describe to what extent and how are persons with disabilities and their representative organizations involved in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of support services.***

The measures for promoting and ensuring full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by PwDs in Turkey have been set at the level of national policy. Pursuance of the issue of disability in all fields of policy under a human rights based approach and ensuring participation of PwDs to decision making processes constitute the basis of disability policy in Turkey. Especially since the second half of 1990s, many significant institutional or legal arrangements have been updated to promote the realization of human rights of PwDs.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) that promotes full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all PwDs was ratified in 2009 and its Optional Protocol in 2015. Being an international agreement duly put into effect as per Article 90 of the Turkish Constitution, the CRPD - like all other conventions on human rights - has the same force with the Constitution in the hierarchy of norms. Within this scope, the CRPD not only forms a basis for all legal and administrative arrangements, but also constitutes a principle of law to which independent Turkish courts can directly refer.

Established as an organ of Prime Ministry with the objective of coordinating disability policy and services among other public institutions in accordance with Decree Law No. 571 in 1997, The Presidency of Administration for Disabled People (OZIDA) carried on its activities, which include promoting the rights of PwDs, cooperating with public institutions in order to develop policy and services for PwDs, until 2011. OZIDA continued its activities from 1997 to 2011 with the aims of promoting and mainstreaming disability in all policy areas. In this period, Civil Society Organizations of PwDs were represented in two advisory boards of OZIDA together with other public institutions and organizations. The names of the concerned advisory boards were “Disability Council” and “Executive Committee on Disability”.

By enactment of Decree Law No. 633 on 08 June 2011, a new ministry under the title of Ministry of Family and Social Policies (ASPB) was established with the purposes of rendering social services and assistance more efficiently and with a holistic approach. After this date, OZIDA that had been operating affiliated with the Prime Ministry since 1997 and the related units of Turkish Social Service and Children Protection Institution (SHCEK) that had been rendering disability services in local level were reconstructed to form the General Directorate of Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly (EYHGM) under the auspices of ASPB.

As the focal point of the CRPD since 2011, EYHGM carries out various activities in order to promote and ensure implementation of the CRPD in cooperation with relevant ministries, public institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs) - particularly the ones representing persons with disabilities and academia. Within this context, it tries to mainstream disability into all policy areas and organizes various awareness raising activities aimed at different target groups.

In order to promote the implementation and monitoring of the Convention, Monitoring and Evaluation Board on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was established in line with Prime Ministry Circular No. 2013/8. As civil society has an important role to play in the policy making process, it was envisaged that the board would be consisted of high level representatives of the related and responsible public institutions and representatives of disability CSOs and human rights institutions. The board has the tasks of carrying out administrative and legal work regarding protection, enhancement and usage of the rights of PwDs, making recommendations on the possible measures to be taken, as well as drafting and approving strategies and plans of action and ensuring cooperation and coordination among institutions. Through this Board PwDs can directly be involved in decision-making processes that directly concern them.

Understanding of disability policy in Turkey was shaped by Turkish Disability Act No. 5378 of 2005 that can be defined as a framework law on disability. The aim of the Act is to take necessary measures to provide equal opportunity to PwDs as other individuals for their full and effective participation into the society through promoting, protecting and ensuring the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and by strengthening respect for their inherent dignity. This Act established that developing policies to prevent any possible governmental abuse of disability or PwDs in the provision of disability services in the light of immunity of human dignity and honor; ensuring anti-discrimination forms the basis of disability focused policies. Moreover, Turkish Disability Act sets out the principle that participation of PwDs, their families and volunteering organizations to all decision making processes is essential. The Act also regulates the obligation of receiving opinion from ASPB in all legislative arrangements to be carried out by public institutions regarding PwDs.

Pursuant to the provisions of Regulation on Procedures and Principles of Strategic Planning in Public Institutions, ensuring participation of CSOs to strategic planning of all public institutions was accepted as one of the general principles. In line with this principle, ASPB and other institutions providing service for PwDs also ask for comments and contributions of CSOs in disability field.

Disability organizations take an active role especially in policy making and legislation preparation processes. EYHGM was assigned with the duties of ensuring coordination among universities, local governments, public interest foundations/associations, other CSO’s and private sector and preparing and implementing joint projects. In addition, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities highlights that persons with disabilities should be involved in all policy-making processes affecting them, In spite of progressive achievement in recent years, there are still substantial challenges for ensuring genuine cooperation in this field. One of the reasons is the inadequate capacity of CSOs that could adversely affect their influence upon disability policy, as the voice of persons with disabilities in Turkey. The other reason is that CSOs have some difficulties in securing a mainstream funding in order to realise their projects.

To increase the institutional capacity of CSOs; supporting good practices and strengthening their relations with all public institutions – notably EYHGM, the Project “Improved Integration of Disabled Persons into Society”, funded under EU – IPA, was initiated in 2009. The project, which actively started in 2011 and completed in June 2015, has contributed to the equal and effective enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities by strengthening the capacity of CSOs and improving administrative capacity of the EYHGM. The capacity of CSOs was increased through organizing 16 regional training programs for the CSOs around the country and awarding grants for their projects regarded as best practices. In this respect 23 projects of CSOs have been granted. Those activities have improved the collaboration between EYHGM and CSOs and thereby resulted in a professional working relationship. Moreover, these activities have strengthened lobbying and advocacy activities of disability CSOs.

In 2015 and 2016, CSO Capacity Building Seminars have been continued at regional level with the purposes of enhancing public sector and civil society dialogue and improving the capacities of civil society organizations, particularly the ones advocating disability rights. 7 seminars at regional level have been organized within this period. The seminars aim at encouraging civil society organizations to carry out rights based advocacy and to put forward human rights-based solutions to the problems in this field.

1. ***Please provide any other relevant information and statistics (including surveys, censuses, administrative data, reports and studies) related to the provision of support to persons with disabilities in your country.***

* **Survey on Problems and Expectations of Disabled People**

In 2010, EYHGM and TUIK carried out in cooperation the *Survey on Problems and Expectations of Disabled People.* This survey covered 11.828 out of 280.014 PwDs registered in National Disability Database with at least 20% disability rate.

* **Studies on Turkish Sign Language**

Within this scope, a regulation on establishment of the Turkish sign language and training of sign language interpreters and instructors was issued in 2006. The Regulation initiated the work towards preparing National Sign Language under the chairmanship of Turkish Language Association and with the participation of related institutions. Science and Approval Board of Turkish Sign Language was established affiliated with Turkish Language Association with the aim of preparing grammar rules and a dictionary of sign language. After specification of Turkish Sign Language Finger Alphabet, all words in Online Turkish Dictionary of Turkish Language Association were illustrated in finger alphabet. Besides, the website of Turkish Language Association includes a voice dictionary of Turkish, which is indeed the audio version of Updated Turkish Dictionary. There are currently efforts to print this dictionary in Braille Alphabet.

With the purpose of providing a common use of symbols in sign language and eliminating discrepancies, MEB prepared the Turkish Sign Language Dictionary. The Dictionary was published in 5000 copies and sent to the related public institutions for revision. Furthermore, within the scope of related activities with this dictionary, a training course for trainers of sign language was organized with the participation 81 persons. It is planned to extend the use of the dictionary after revision to be made in line with the opinions and recommendations of related organizations and institutions. The work on preparation of grammar rules of Turkish Sign Language is currently in progress. Within this context, the research project on Turkish Sign Language was carried out in 2015 with the purposes of preparing a Turkish Sign Language Grammar Book and a sample dictionary. The research was initiated with the participation of 113 persons in 26 provinces in 6 geographical regions of Turkey. During the interviews with the participants, approximately 800 thousand words were analyzed and 200 thousand of these words were deciphered. Turkish sign language grammar book and a sample dictionary were prepared as the outputs of the project and the electronic versions of them have been published on the website of the Ministry.

* **Research on Social Distance Between the Society and the Children with Disabilities**

A *KAP* (Knowledge Attitude and Practice) survey was conducted by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in cooperation with UNICEF Turkey in order to reduce the social distance between the society and children with disabilities and their families. The survey was conducted in 7 geographical regions, 44 provinces and 204 neighborhoods throughout Turkey by using face-to-face methodology. The number of total respondents was 2.865. The communication campaign titled “There is another you” that has been carried out in cooperation with UNICEF was prepared based on the data obtained by this survey.

* **Project on Increasing the Efficiency of Supportive Special Education Services (DESOP):**

Approximately 300 students in Turkey receive supportive education from special education and rehabilitation centers and the education fee for this service is covered by Ministry of National Education. This project, carried out by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the Ministry of National Education in cooperation with the private sector, included a survey that aimed to obtain information on the physical conditions, the scope of the services provided, profile of the families, satisfaction levels of families on service provision and the quality of education programmes. The survey was conducted in 1710 private special education and rehabilitation institutions that employ approximately 30 thousand personnel in 81 provinces. The findings of this survey were published and were disseminated in 1000 copies.