**A Report responding to the Questions for civil society**

##  Iranian Disability Support Association (IDSA)\*

**1**. Please provide information in relation to the existence, in your country or context of work, of legislation and policies concerning mainstream and/or specific social protection programmes with regard to persons with disabilities, including:

- Institutional framework in charge of its implementation;
- Legislative, administrative, judiciary and/or other measures aiming to ensure access of persons with disabilities to mainstream social protection programmes (e.g., poverty reduction, social insurance, health care, public work, housing);
- Creation of disability-specific programmes (such as disability pensions, mobility grants or others);
- Fiscal adjustments or other similar measures.

2. Please provide information on how persons with disabilities are consulted and actively involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of social protection programmes in your country or context of work.

3. Please provide information in relation to difficulties and good practices on the design, implementation and monitoring of mainstream and/or specific social protection programmes with regard to persons with disabilities, including:

- Conditions of accessibility and the provision of reasonable accommodation;
- Consideration of the specific needs of persons with disabilities within the services and/or benefits of existing programmes;
- Difficulties experienced by persons with disabilities and their families in fulfilling requirements and/or conditions for accessing social protection programmes;
- Consideration to age, gender and race or ethnic-based differences and possible barriers;
- Conflicts between the requirements and/or benefits of existing programmes, and the exercise by persons with disabilities of rights such as the enjoyment of legal capacity, living independently and being included in the community, or work;
- Allocation of grants to personal budgets;
- Disability-sensitive training and awareness-raising for civil servants and/or external partners;
- Existence of complaint or appeal mechanisms.

4. Please provide any information or data available in your country or context of work, disaggregated by impairment, sex, age or ethnic origin if possible, in relation to:
- Coverage of social protection programmes by persons with disabilities;
- Rates of poverty among persons with disabilities;
- Additional costs or expenses related to disability.

5. Please provide information in relation to the eligibility criteria used, in your country or context of work, for accessing mainstream and/or specific social protection programmes with regard to persons with disabilities, including:

- Definition of disability and disability assessments used for eligibility determination;
- Consistency of the eligibility criteria among different social protection programmes;
- Use of income and/or poverty thresholds;
- Consideration of disability-related extra costs in means-tested thresholds.

1. Iranian disability acts concluded in the ratification of the Comprehensive Act of Supporting the Disabled (or Disability Protect Act 7 ) by the Islamic parliament in 2004, which is considered as the first major Iranian legislation for persons with disabilities. The sixteen articles of the Comprehensive Act of Supporting the Disabled obligates the Iranian government to provide resources to meet disability needs and rights. It emphasizes the accessibility of public buildings and venues; improving rehabilitative and vocational services; financial waivers for the disabled users of recreational, sportive and transportation facilities; disability insurance; employment opportunities; free education for disabled students and candidates; housing loans and facilities; and allocating two hours per week to disability programs on national television.
2. There have been a number of related Ministry bodies, non-governmental public bodies and revolutionary organisations working in the area elating to persons with disabilities. Currently, the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare is responsible for the area and the activities of the State Welfare Organization (SWO). "The Foundation of Martyr and Veterans Affairs" (FMVA) Bonyad Shahid Va Omor Isargran is also an important organisation, in relating to the war disabilities, this organisation receives public funds, but is called independent and non-governmental body.
3. Healthcare and preventive services including medicine, nursing, rehabilitation, screening and prevention services as well as education of caregivers: In this regard, Welfare Organization (SWO) and Ministry of Health and Medical Education are responsible for providing this service. Welfare Organization (SWO) facilitates establishment of centres through licensing and subsidies and it also monitors the performance of these centres.
4. Institutions active in this field are inconsistent and sometimes inadequate in terms of a comprehensive structure and system of welfare and social care and services. For this reason and due to the improper effective management of resources and poor coordination between organizations, the design of a comprehensive system of social welfare to organize scattered collections is a national necessity to provide a developmental structure and performance.
5. Persons with disabilities and elderly population are not supported by insurance including Medicare and long term care insurance (LTCI). The Islamic Republic of Iran has not designed or proposed to socialize care for disabled people; health and social insurance coverage in Iran is mainly a function of occupational status. In the case of supportive and semi-supportive insurance, certain sectors of society, such as the Persons Disabled in War are covered. Accordingly, persons with disabilities and elderly people as ‘Disabled Person’ or 'Elderly' are not covered by any of insurance organizations.
Currently limited state resources, clarify the importance and necessity of strengthening and developing insurance plans.
6. There is no accurate statistics of the number of persons with disabilities and elderly people covered by insurance and supporting systems. There is a high probability of overlap between them. According to a 2006 survey of the population of 70 million people, there are 1.2 million disabled people; in 2011, there were 1. 5 million disabled people amongst a population of 75 million. Of these, around 350,000 are either suffering from deafness or blindness, around 600,000 have physical and movement disabilities and around 350,000 are mentally disabled. Some experts have argued, however, that the real number is much higher. They put the percentage of the disabled among the population at around 12%, and that the government tends to misrepresent the actual numbers. This misrepresentation even presents itself in the data which is produced by different branches of the government. It seems that the government mainly misrepresents and under-represents the numbers of disabled people in order to refrain from providing services to these people.
7. Failure to implement the sixteen articles of the Comprehensive Act of Supporting the Disabled Persons, lack of observing accessibility and physical standards and of spaces, places, houses and care centres cause serious problems for persons with disabilities, as well as care and welfare services. No sanctions or penalties have been anticipated for the violators of any of the sixteen articles of the Comprehensive Act of Supporting the Disabled. This important issue will reduce possible services and social participation of disabled people and cause serious problems for their caregivers. Currently, in the cities of Iran, incomplete or improper repair of roads and streets, inaccessible and unreachable transportation, public places and parks have a significant detrimental impact on people with disabilities, undoubtedly adversely affect the social and economic status of them in their day to day lives. As the law exists only on paper, these buildings are so inaccessible that to leave home has become an arduous task; so much so, in effect, that many disabled people are trapped in their homes. Access to public transport, whether taxi, bus or metro, is so limited that attempting to use them is exhausting, and even cultural places and cinemas have few special seats for disabled people. Parking places for the disabled are easily occupied by other cars and there is no law to prevent this from happening.
8. Unemployment is one of the main problems among disabled people, especially disabled women. As the authorities do not provide us with proper data, it is extremely hard to estimate unemployment rates among disabled people. In fact, they constantly provide us with different data. According to a 2012 survey, for example, 1.36% of the population was disabled and 21% of these people were unemployed. Around 1.2 million disabled people are served by welfare organizations, which mean that millions of disabled people are left to their own destinies as they receive no support and it is left to their families and others to support them. According to a 2008 survey, of 3 million disabled people who were eligible to work, only 600,000 have been able to secure employment. This means that the majority of disabled people are unemployed and suffering from hardship. In Iran, anyone who has no job will not be covered by social security, and thus not be eligible for a retirement pension. These people, even in their old age, will not have financial or psychological security
9. Iran has not adopted appropriate policies for providing care and supportive services to people with special needs; they potentially face a social, economic, and health crisis. The objectives, requirements, priorities has not been explained or developed as a plan focused on the needs of disabled people.
10. Iran’s agencies and institutions relevant to persons with disabilities take measures to support them given their current tasks and allocated budget. But these measures do not seem adequate, because solving persons with disabilities problem, which its impacts will be intensified in future-requires responsibility and cooperation of the agencies and public institutions. Merging and integrating services have been a vital part of providing health care, but lack of implementation power of Welfare Organization (SWO) has caused problems on available services, which should be made more comprehensive.
11. Establishing a formal consistent organization to plan and conduct activities associated with persons with disabilities population can be a strategic measure in Iran. It could be a solution to enhance support and services. Planning in the form of a Network (Home Health) for providing primary health care services to solve problems of persons with disabilities and should have be done in the primary stages. All organizations should offer provincial and national plans to train enhanced support.

## IDSA is a NGO with charity registration number: 1116648. IDSA is member of the World Disability Union/ England Charity Commission and Greater London Authority (disabled & deaf people group)

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