

Takayama Declaration on the Development of Communities-for-All in Asia and the Pacific

I. Preamble

We, representatives of Governments, the private sector, organizations concerned with accessibility and/or accessible tourism, organizations of and for persons with disabilities, academic and research institutions, development organizations, and other civil society organizations, met in Takayama, Gifu Prefecture, Japan from 24 to 26 November 2009 at the “*ESCAP-Takayama 2009 Congress on the Creation of an Inclusive and Accessible Community in Asia and the Pacific*” organized by ESCAP and the City of Takayama,

Acknowledge with deep appreciation the Government of Japan and the City of Takayama for their hospitality, support, and the successful organization of the Congress;

Appreciate the leadership of the City of Takayama in creating and promoting a universal-design-based community-for-all with its resulting positive economic and social impacts;

Affirm the principles of full enjoyment of all rights, non-discrimination, and universal design which are embraced in international and regional instruments, in particular, the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, the *Biwako Millennium Framework for Action Towards an Inclusive, Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific*, and *Biwako Plus Five: Further Efforts Towards an Inclusive, Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific*;

Further affirm the principle of “nothing about us without us” when communities-for-all and accessible tourism in urban and rural areas are developed; “nothing about us without us” highlights the fundamental importance of the participation of persons with disabilities, older persons and multi-generational families in needs assessment, policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;

Also affirm the importance of promoting accessible tourism as a means of inclusive and sustainable economic and social development as delineated in the *Bali Declaration on Barrier-free Tourism for People with Disabilities* (2000), the *Sanya Declaration on Accessible Tourism in Asia and the Pacific* (2006) and the *Bangkok Recommendations on Accessible Tourism in Asia and the Pacific* (2007);

Mindful that demographic trends in the region - including ageing and lower fertility rate, the concomitant rise in proportion of those who have difficulties in mobility, communication and understanding - necessitate the creation of rural and urban universal-design-based inclusive communities-for-all and accessible tourism, both of which require accessible built environments and accessible information, transportation and services;

Acknowledge that the City of Takayama, because of the pride in its history, its socially inclusive values, and the respect of its citizens for diversity, and because it has drawn on the combined wisdom and expertise of the government, citizens, experts, users, and the private sector, has created a community-for-all which acts as a model for others to follow;

Commend the City of Takayama for its foresight, determination, long-term planning and mutually trusting political and civic relations in the development of community-for-all, including the successful development of a well-established, socially, and economically sustainable accessible tourism sector based on the city's historical assets;

To achieve the goal of inclusive, accessible and universal-design-based societies-for-all in Asia and the Pacific,

We hereby recommend actions to be taken by the key stakeholders:

II. Recommendations

A. Regional network for action

1. An Asia-Pacific network for the development of communities-for-all be established with an aim to promote the creation of communities-for-all in Asia and the Pacific;
2. By completion of the current *Asia Pacific Decade on Disabled Person* in 2012, the network identifies in the region successful practices in the development of communities-for-all in urban and rural areas;
3. Member of the network organizes within three years the next regional Congress to discuss universal-design-based local solutions and progress in the development of accessibility in the region;

B. Policy development and implementation

1. ESCAP members sign and ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol, and implement the provisions thereafter;
2. In line with the principles and requirements in the CRPD, ESCAP develop and disseminate regional guidelines on accessibility in accessible formats to serve as a model technical material; Particular attention are to be paid to needs in rural areas and gender perspective of accessibility;

3. Inter-governmental and international organizations, including subregional organizations such as ASEAN, in consultation with representatives of disabled people's organizations, develop trade tax exemptions policies and other relevant policies to enhance and ensure region-wide and transnational availability of assistive devices and accessible transportation;
4. Governments at all levels, with full participation of disabled people's and other consumers' organizations, non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations, implement the provisions of the CRPD by developing policies, laws, ordinances, guideline and technical standards on accessibility using accessible formats in line with the concept of universal design; Particular attention are to be paid to needs in rural areas and gender perspective of accessibility;
5. The private sector, particularly in tourism, non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations, adopt universal design-based accessibility policies in the development, delivery and procurement of programme, products and services;

C. Advocacy

1. All key stakeholders collaborate to organize public information campaigns and accessible promotional materials such as videos, publications and web-based information, so that policy makers and the private sector are motivated to take timely and appropriate actions in creating communities-for-all in Asia and the Pacific;
2. United Nations organizations in the region encourage the development of communities-for-all by regularly conferring awards for excellence in the development of inclusive communities so that such awards will act as a stimulus for all Asia-Pacific nations to achieve inclusion;

D. Capacity building and empowerment

1. Relevant professional bodies require their members to attend accessibility and universal design courses in their "continuing professional development programmes";
2. Governments at all levels require all educational institutions to develop and implement curricula on understanding accessibility and universal design and involve persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of such curricula;
3. Governments at all levels and the private sector, in collaboration with representatives of disabled people's organizations, provide all employees, members, and staff with disability awareness, equality and universal design training as part of any induction programme for new employees;
4. Governments at all levels and the private sector, in collaboration with representatives of disabled people's organizations, promote social

enterprise and entrepreneurships of persons with disabilities;

E. Research and data collection

1. Governments at all levels and other key stakeholders conduct access audits of key public facilities on a regular basis and use findings to enhance policy development and effect immediate action; Particular attention are to be paid to needs in rural areas and gender perspective of accessibility;
2. The findings should be made available to the public in accessible formats;
3. Disabled people's organizations, research institutions, and experts collaborate in documenting good practices in universal-design-based community development, highlighting those which serve as good business cases and which provide cost-effective and affordable universal-design solutions; Particular attention are to be paid to needs in rural areas and gender perspective of accessibility;
4. Disabled people's organizations, research institutions, and experts collaborate in conducting research on locally available, appropriate, and cost-effective technologies which promotes universal-design-based community development; Particular attention are to be paid to gender dimension as well as needs in rural areas;

F. Resource generation and mobilization for development of communities-for-all

1. Governments at all levels mobilize internal and external financial resources for improving accessibility in order to progress the creation of communities-for-all. They should develop and implement innovative financing schemes such as the establishment of universal-design-hospitality funds, provision of tax incentives, and partial subsidies for the development and the purchase of universal design products and services;
2. United Nations organizations and agencies mobilize financial resources for improving accessibility in their own facilities, in their information in print and on line, and in their other services.

APPENDIX: Definition of Terms used in these recommendations

Definitions of key terms used in these recommendations are as follow:

1. “Disability” refers to the outcome or result of a complex relationship between an individual's health condition and personal factors and of the external factors that represent the circumstances in which the individual lives;
2. “Accessibility” refers to a measure of the extent to which products and services are used by a person with a disability as effectively as can be used by persons without disabilities. Accessibility should enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life. Persons with disabilities should be able to access, on an equal basis with others, the physical environment, transportation, information and communications - including information and communications technologies and systems - and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas;
3. “Accessible Tourism” (also known as “Access Tourism”, “Universal Tourism”, “Inclusive Tourism” and in some countries such as in Japan “Barrier-free Tourism”) is tourism and travel that is accessible to all people, with disabilities or not, including those with mobility, hearing, sight, cognitive, or intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, older persons and those with temporary disabilities;
4. “Universal design” refers to products, built environments, programmes, and services that have been designed in such a way as to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design*. “Universal design” shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where they are needed;
5. “Barrier-free” refers to a situation where physical, informational, institutional and attitudinal barriers for a particular group of people (i.e., persons with disabilities, older persons) are removed so that they may fully participate in society on an equal basis with others;
6. “Key stakeholders” are Governments at all levels, the private sector, disabled people's organizations, academic institutions, accessibility experts, non-governmental organizations, other civil society organizations, and international and inter-governmental organizations. They include regional organizations such as ASEAN, and multi-national corporations.

* Participants of the Congress were of the view that “universal design” does not refer merely to an act of designing, but also to a comprehensive and dynamic strategy of community development which responds to diverse needs within the community, and which provides a new dimension to current cultural and social dynamics.