



# Media Update

29 June 2015

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## WHO

PRESS RELEASE

### **Governments of Pakistan, Canadian High Commission and World Health Organization collaborate to collect comprehensive information for Disabilities in Pakistan**

According to World Health Organization (WHO), over a billion people or around 15% of the world's population have some sort of disability, whereas the prevalence of disability in Pakistan is estimated by the Population Census 1998 at 2.49%. Effective policy-making requires reliable, valid and detailed data on all aspects of disability – impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions, related health conditions, environmental factors—information that is lacking in Pakistan as in most of the developing countries. There is no standardized instrument for data collection on disability that provides comprehensive and systematic documentation of all aspects of functioning in a population. Pakistan has ratified the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in July 2011 which requires Governments to collect statistical and research data to identify and address barriers faced by people with disability under the Convention (CRPD, Article 31).

With support from the Canadian High Commission and collaboration from Pakistan-Bait-UI Mal, Government of Pakistan, the WHO, as lead agency in Disabilities in the UN system, is conducting the Model Disability Survey (MDS). On the occasion of the launching of the joint WHO-Canada Model Disability Survey project Her Excellency, the Canadian High Commissioner, Ms. Heather Cruden said: "we are very pleased to be collaborating with the World Health Organisation in Pakistan to clarify needs, resources and policies to support the people of Pakistan. This Model Disability Survey is a





first step in this process of identifying an important community of valiant citizens of Pakistan who suffer from disabilities".

The Model Disability Survey (MDS) will be a pilot study to provide detailed and nuanced information on the lives of people with disability in the Attock district. The initiative is being funded by the High Commission of Canada through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI). A two day training on the questionnaire for data collection, which has been developed by WHO and the World Bank in collaboration with the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, Statistics Norway, and a diverse range of other stakeholders, including the International Disability Alliance, was organized at the WHO office Islamabad, February 5-6, 2015. Disability experts from WHO Headquarters, Geneva and Country office conducted the training session.

At the concluding session, Barrister Abid Waheed Sheikh, Managing Director Pakistan, Bait-ul- Mal thanked the High Commission of Canada and WHO for undertaking this initiative and said that the evidence resulting from the MDS will help policy-makers identify the interventions required to maximize the inclusion and functioning of Pakistani citizens suffering from disabilities and to promote and protect their human rights, as endorsed in Pakistani legislation. WHO Country Representative Dr Michel Thieren underlined the fact that MDS provides more complete understanding of the lived experience of people with disability and provides a better approximation of the true size and potential of the most unheard and uncouneted population with disability. It will also offer estimates for tracking Federal/Provincial trends and making international comparisons, facilitating developing disability inclusive development policies/strategies resulting in mainstreaming of Persons with Disabilities in an inclusive society.

Dr Maryam Mallick, Technical Advisor for Medical Rehabilitation, WHO, indicated that the data analysis and report generation of the MDS survey will be conducted by the Institute for Public Health and Health Services Research, Department of Medical Informatics Epidemiology and Research Unit, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany. Pakistan is the second country in the world implementing the Model Disability Survey in a representative sample of a region and will provide the basis for a country wide disability. This survey will also provide information about how the MDS can be used to monitor the implementation of UNCRPD.





Model Disability Survey will facilitate the monitoring of the situation of people with disability, to make sure they are not left behind in the wake of development progress, and to identify ways to include disability in national/provincial Post-2015 Development Agenda.

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