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Malaysian Plan of Action for People with Disabilities 2016-2022: Way Forward

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Abstract

The objective of this paper, firstly to identify the commitment of Malaysia government towards providing good facilities, education, health, accessibility, culture, social attraction for People with Disabilities (PwDs) in society. Secondly, to review various approaches and strategies applied by the government and non-government to fulfill the intention of Malaysian Plan of Action for People with Disabilities 2016-2022. Malaysia has made a commitment under UNCRPD in 2006 and have agreed to adopt and enact laws so that persons with disabilities would have equal rights to education, employment, and cultural life; the right to own and inherit property; not be discriminated against in marriage, children; not be unwilling subjects in medical experiments. Universal Design and Social Responsibility are tightly related in term of its core subjects such as Human Rights against discrimination and specific vulnerable groups; economic, social and cultural rights; consumer issues such as access to essential services; education, awareness and community involvement as well as technology development and access; and social investment. Social Responsibility is an ethical ideology or theory than an entity, be it an organization or individual, has an obligation to act to benefit society at large and universal design is an active agent in this process. The methodology applied for this paper by using table research and as well as secondary data based on literature review. The data will be analysed using content analysis and case studies. The contribution of this paper will give Malaysian opportunities to share their experiences with other nations on how Malaysian implementing action of plan for People with Disabilities (PwDs) for the future in relation to human rights.

Keywords: People with Disabilities (PwDs), Universal Design, Malaysian Plan of Action, Social responsibility and Accessibility

1. Introduction

The United Nations (UN) started the initiation of United Nation International Year of Disabled Persons in 1982 followed by the International Decade of Disabled Person from 1983 to 1992 (Kose, 2010, Parker, 2001)

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where it has effected advocacy issues in Asian countries in the Asia Pacific region under the United Nation Economic and Social Commission of Asia Pacific (UNESCAP). Thus, Malaysia has also being effected and signed the Proclamation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 1993-2002 for its 1st decade with its further continuation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 2003 – 2012 for its 2nd decade, which is embraced in the United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and its Optional Protocol when it is developed in 2006, as argued by Kanter (2015) and coined by Series (2015) that UNCRPD was a response in concerning that previous existing human rights instruments have not given significant impact on improving the quality of live for PwDs, making UNCRPD a remarkable legal instrument by representing the culmination of many different strands of disability activism over the last few decades.

The UNCRPD covers mainly the personal aspects and equal interaction within society and its principles established under Article 3, include respect for inherent dignity; individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons; non-discrimination; full and effective participation and inclusion in society; respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity; equality of opportunity; accessibility; equality between man and women; respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities and preserve their identities (Hubert et al., 2016). The UNCRPD has shifted the charity paradigm towards people with disabilities to the human rights-based approach. The rights proclaimed in the treaty include not just civil and political rights but also socio-economic and cultural rights as well as the effort of empowering persons with disabilities must be included in national agenda, and anything that leads to exclusion and discrimination against them must be stopped. For the current decade of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 2013 – 2022, the action plan for it is the 'Incheon Strategy' with the tag line of "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. The Incheon Strategy has outlined 10 goals, 27 target and 62 indicators for upholding the rights for social inclusion and equality of PwDs a reality.

2. Malaysian Commitments and Social Responsibility

Malaysia has also shown the commitment to promote and protect the rights of People with Disabilities (PwDs) and this is manifested by enacting new laws, formulating new policies and taking appropriate measures to comply with international law and resolve preliminary issues surrounding the ratification of the treaty into the domestic legal framework (Tah and Mokhtar, 2016). It has been identified that Malaysian Government has been committed towards providing good facilities, education, health, accessibility, culture, social attraction for in society. The commitment has been a responsibility of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD) and they review various approaches and strategies to fulfill the intention of Malaysian Plan of Action for People with Disabilities 2016-2022 that is in line with Government Persons with Disability (PwDs) Policy and the 11th Malaysian Plan (RMK11).

Universal Design and Social Responsibility are tightly related in term of its core subjects such as Human Rights against discrimination and specific vulnerable groups; economic, social and cultural rights; consumer issues such as access to essential services; education, awareness and community involvement as well as technology development and access; and social investment. Social Responsibility is an ethical ideology or theory than an entity, be it an organization or individual, has an obligation to act to benefit society at large and universal design is an active agent in this process. Performance of an organization is in relation to the society in which it operates and its impact on the environment has become a critical part of measuring its overall performance and its ability to continue operating effectively. This is, in part, a reflection of the growing recognition of the need to ensure healthy ecosystems, social equity and good organizational governance. In the long run, the organizations' activities depend on the health of the world's ecosystems. As according to



the International Standard, ISO Secretary-General, Mr. Rob Steele, “The publication of ISO 26000 is eagerly awaited by organizations world, whether they are business enterprises, or public sector organizations. Operating in a socially responsible manner is no longer an option. It is becoming a requirement of society worldwide. What makes ISO 26000 exceptional among the many already existing social responsibility initiatives is that it distills a truly international consensus on what social responsibility means and what core subjects need to be address to implement it. In addition, it is based on broad stakeholder input, including from developing countries, business, government, consumers, labour, non- governmental organizations and others.” (Rahim et al., 2015)

As stated by Asiah Abdul Rahim et al. (2014), a sustainable design for accessibility should be considered in all of our physical development in order to make our cities world class. Accessibility in the built environment is increasingly relevant to Malaysia, not only to prepare for the ageing population, persons with disabilities (PwDs) but also the whole population at large. In ASEAN countries, the statistics of population for the disabled people and elderly in Asia and the Pacific region are reported to be increasingly rapid with an estimation of 40% of total world population (Asiah Abdul Rahim et al., 2015, 2015) and with the addition of the population of 65 years and above is showing a high percentage by 2030 as the result of the baby boomers generation is aging and having longer life span as aging increases the potential of vulnerability in the environment. Supporting this fact, (Kose, 2010) once charts that Japan has the fastest growing aging population and predicted an increase of more that 25% of the country population over 65 years and above in 2015, and the pressure of demographic and changing of cultural patterns leads older people in Singapore to be living apart from their families independently (Harrison, 2001).

3. The Malaysian Plan of Action for People with Disabilities 2016-2022

The way forward and future planning for The Malaysian Plan of Action for People with Disabilities 2016-2022 is in line with the “Incheon Strategy” time line as well with the 11th Malaysian Plan (RMK-11) that the planning would be until the year 2022 with in mind of short term and long term planning with the government management and implementation system.

The document initially refer to the existing Malaysian Policy for Persons with Disability, that are the policies objectives; 1) To give recognition as well as taking the principle that PwDs has the rights and equal opportunity for full participation in the community; 2) To ensure PwDs deserve the same right, opportunity and access under national laws; 3) To eliminate disability discrimination; 4) To educate and increase society awareness towards PwDs rights. Adopting and locally adapting from The Incheon Strategy of its outlined of 10 goals, 27 target and 62 indicators, The Malaysian Plan of Action for People with Disabilities 2016-2022 has simplified it by targeting the essential aspects only related to the intended strategy and objective of strategic cores identified to be implemented within this 7 years of planning.

The Malaysian Plan of Action for People with Disabilities 2016-2022 has outlined 10 strategic cores that matches 10 goals of The Incheon Strategy as detailed as follows:

1. Core Strategic 1 (Goal 3 Incheon Strategy) – Increase accessibility of PwDs; Strategy: Increase PwDs mobility and quality of life for a productive and inclusive community.
2. Core Strategic 2 (Goal 1 Incheon Strategy) – Enhance Economics of PwDs; Strategy: Increase PwDs participation in open work force market, inclusive and accessible for them to life independently and contribute to the nation development.
3. Core Strategic 3 (Goal 5 Incheon Strategy) – Increase PwDs Access for Education; Strategy: Increase PwDs access to a quality and inclusive education at all stages including life long learning towards talented and potential development of human resources.
4. Core Strategic 4 (Goal 5 Incheon Strategy) – Increase PwDs Access for Healthcare; Strategy:

increase PwDs access for quality healthcare services for them to live well; enhance PwDs access for a comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation program including aspect of healthcare, occupation, education and social for inclusive participation.

5. Core Strategic 5 (Goal 4 Incheon Strategy) – Enhance Social Services of PwDs; Strategy: increase PwDs access to cultural life, recreation and sports; increase PwDs chances of owning a house; enhance the mechanism of social protection and support services.
6. Core Strategic 6 (Goal 2 Incheon Strategy) – Increase PwDs Participation in Planning and Decision Making; Strategy: Increase PwDs Participation in political process and process of planning and Decision Making.
7. Core Strategic 7 (Goal 7 Incheon Strategy) – Upgrade PwDs Access in Risk Disaster Management; Strategy: Develop planning and strategy of in Risk Disaster Management for PwDs.
8. Core Strategic 8 (Goal 8 Incheon Strategy) – Research and Development; Strategy: Encourage research and development about PwDs as well as conveying the research outcome for better action; enhance mechanism of coordination of implementation, evaluation and assessment of PwDs programs.
9. Core Strategic 9 (Goal 10 Incheon Strategy) – Advocacy; Strategy: increase awareness and shaping positive attitude among community towards PwDs; linking and strengthen regional and international cooperation.
10. Core Strategic 10 (Goal 9 Incheon Strategy) – Convention of the Right of PwDs; Strategy: implementation of laws in line with Convention of the Right of PwDs.

The action plan, with the outline of all 10 strategic cores, has detailed out its strategies with several objectives complete with program / action for short term planning for year 2016-2018 and long term planning for the year 2016-2022, a KPI of indicators and targets on achieving those indicators with listing down the ministry / government agencies responsible. An example of this is that of Core Strategic 1 that adopts Goal number 3 of the Incheon Strategy that is intended to increase accessibility of PwDs with the strategy of increase PwDs mobility and quality of life for a productive and inclusive community. Having an objective to increase accessibility to the physical built environment in urban and rural areas with the concept of Universal Design, the short term action is to establish an access audit team at all Local Authority at each state with training twice per year and eventually conducting access audit at building and facilities in the long run with specific indicators and targets to be achieved (fig. 2).



Fig.1. A snapshot of the document that has outlined the detailed strategic core and strategy (*document is in*



Malay language).

PROGRAM / TINDAKAN	KPI		KEMENTERIAN / AGENSI BERTANGGUNGJAWAB
	INDIKATOR	SASARAN	
JANGKA MASA SEDERHANA 2016 – 2018: (a) Menubuhkan pasukan audit akses.	1. Bilangan pasukan audit akses di setiap negeri. 2. Bilangan latihan audit akses kepada pasukan audit akses.	1. Satu (1) pasukan audit akses ditubuhkan di setiap negeri. 2. Dua (2) kali setahun.	AGENSI PENERAJU: KPKT > KPWKM > KKR > KWP > KPM > KKM > MOTAC > PBT > NGO > IPT
JANGKA MASA PANJANG 2016 – 2022: (b) Menjalankan audit akses dan audit susulan pelaksanaan terhadap kemudahan dalam dan luar bangunan / ruang awam / terminal pengangkutan awam / tempat kerja / kawasan perumahan.	1. Bilangan kemudahan dalam dan luar bangunan / ruang awam / terminal pengangkutan awam / tempat kerja / kawasan perumahan yang diaudit tahap kebolehaksesan kepada OKU setiap tahun. 2. Bilangan audit susulan pelaksanaan yang akan diadakan dalam tempoh setahun selepas audit akses.	1. Lima (5) kemudahan dalam dan luar bangunan / ruang awam / terminal pengangkutan awam / tempat kerja / kawasan perumahan yang mesra OKU dilaksanakan audit akses di setiap negeri setiap tahun. 2. Audit susulan pelaksanaan akan diadakan sekali dalam tempoh setahun selepas audit akses. Sekiranya tidak mematuhi, audit susulan kedua akan dilaksanakan dalam tempoh 6 bulan.	AGENSI PENERAJU: KPKT > KPWKM > KKR > KWP > KPM > KKM > MOTAC > MOT > KBS > PBT > NGO

Fig.2. A snapshot of the document that has outlined the detailed strategic core, objective and indicators (document is in Malay language).

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper gives an overview of the opportunity to convey what are the planning and strategies on how Malaysian Government initiate implementation and action for People with Disabilities (PwDs) in Malaysia by conferment to the Incheon Strategy and the UNCRPD in hopes that the rights of PwDs is adhere and would give a better opportunity and social inclusion for the PwDs to have full participation in terms of accessibility in the built environment.

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