Introduction – the problem and goals of our project

People with disabilities (PWDs) are four times more likely to die when a disaster strikes than those without disabilities. Yet PWDs remain unseen, unheard and unaccounted for in DRR. This affects 650 million PWDs in Southeast Asia alone.

There are multiple causes:

- **PWDs are often poor and are subject to disempowering stigmas, discrimination and marginalization that perpetuate existing socio-cultural norms and beliefs;**
- **Women and girls with disabilities are at greater risk of physical and sexual abuse after disasters due to displacement and unsafe shelters and public spaces;**
- **The physical and social isolation of PWDs hampers participation in daily life – encouraging passivity and them being seen as objects of care, limiting access to education, social networks and risk knowledge;**
- **There is little empirical evidence on the challenges PWDs face when natural hazards occur;**
- **What type of support (resources) do PWDs need & want when natural hazards strike & in what form/from whom?**
- **People with disabilities (PWDs) are four times more likely to need & lack the skills and capacity to mainstream disability-inclusive DRR (DiDRR);**
- **Disability rights-based laws and a lack of robust guidelines on how to mainstream disability-inclusive DRR (DiDRR);**
- **DiDRR stakeholders have little knowledge on DiDRR and lack the skills and capacity needed to mainstream DiDRR. There are few platforms to link DiDRR stakeholders with those who have the skills and knowledge they lack – specifically, Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs) and PWDs themselves.**

Funded through the Global Resilience Partnership, our multi-partner project (comprised of PWDs, DRR specialists and DPOs) aims to address these challenges and fulfill our overarching goal – inclusion for all.

Our goal

To strengthen the voices of PWDs in SE Asia (focusing on Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines) and provide them with the institutional and social support needed to respond effectively to hazards and disasters and to be champions of resilience and change.

Steps needed to achieve DiDRR

Placing PWDs at the centre of DRR requires a systems approach that simultaneously targets change in 3 vital and interconnected areas:

1. **Increasing knowledge and skills by providing PWDs and DPOs training for DiDRR champions**
   - **What do PWDs know about natural hazard risk & disaster preparedness?**
   - **What challenges do PWDs face when natural hazards occur?**
   - **How can DRR stakeholders & DPOs better support PWDs?**
   - **What platforms & resources are needed to encourage PWDs to claim their voice & be DiDRR champions?**
2. **Strengthening capacity of PWDs, DPOs & DRR stakeholders**
   - **Who are the PWD champions?**
   - **What resources do PWDs need access to?**
   - **Who do PWDs need to approach to get the support & resources they need?**
   - **What platforms & resources are needed to encourage PWDs to claim their voice & be DiDRR champions?**
3. **Strengthening partnerships between PWDs, DPOs & DRR stakeholders**
   - **Who are the PWD champions?**
   - **What resources do PWDs need to access?**
   - **Who do PWDs need to approach to get the support & resources they need?**
   - **What platforms & resources are needed to encourage PWDs to claim their voice & be DiDRR champions?**
4. **Mainstreaming DiDRR**
   - **What are the potential entry points for disability inclusion in the DRR process?**
   - **What indicators will enable DRR stakeholders to identify & monitor how inclusive their DRR plans are?**

Achieving DiDRR requires collaboration between all actors

Achieving DiDRR requires a fundamental shift in DRR strategy and practice. DiDRR demands full integration – disability cannot no longer be an “add-on” to existing DRR approaches. This requires collaboration and input by all main DiDRR stakeholders (Figure 2).

Our contributions to realizing the Sendai Framework targets

The rights of PWDs to be fully supported by DRR actors in disasters is recognized by the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) and UNESCAP’s Incheon Strategy (2013–2022).

The Sendai Framework for DRR (2015–2030) explicitly mandates stronger inclusion of PWDs in DRR.

To help contribute to this goal we will:

1. **Increase knowledge & skills by providing empirical knowledge on what support PWDs need and how DRR actors can work with PWDs to ensure this support;**
2. **Foster changes in attitudes by empowering PWDs and DPOs to become champions in their communities and to work directly with PWDs and DRR actors to facilitate shared learning;**
3. **Facilitate inclusive governance processes that support DiDRR (via trainings and workshops);**
4. **Demonstrate DiDRR mainstreaming best practice by developing DiDRR toolkits that have been tested and refined by next-users and providing next-users with working examples of DiDRR.**

Together, these actions and processes will create the foundations needed to support effective and durable DiDRR and will provide a model of best practice for other countries in SE Asia and beyond to follow and adapt.