



**Organizing Committee of 23rd Conference of
Asian Federation on Intellectual Disabilities (AFID),
November 18-24, 2017, Dhaka, Bangladesh**



Conference Secretariat:
SWID Bangladesh

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The 23rd Conference of Asian Federation on Intellectual Disabilities

The Theme of the Conference

The theme of the conference is “Acceptance, Accessibility, Inclusion - A key towards Sustainable Development”. This has been chosen in pursuit of the main spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to “Leave No One Behind”, keeping in mind the historic negligence demonstrated towards persons with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities.

At the global level, it was in 1971 that the United Nations had adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded, four years before a similar declaration was adopted on the rights of persons with all types of disabilities. Subsequently, 1981 was declared as the Year of Persons with disabilities, 1983-1992 was declared as the global decade for persons with disabilities, a World Program of Action was adopted, and a set of 22 Standard Rules for Equalization and full participation of Opportunities for Persons with disabilities was adopted in 1993. At the Regional level, a decade was declared persons with disabilities during 1993-2002. Yet, since none of these declarations were legally binding upon State Parties or the UN itself, while declaring the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), persons with disabilities remained a forgotten agenda. This changed dramatically with the unanimous adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2006, and its entry into force in May 2008.

In Bangladesh, during the proclamation of independence of a new sovereign state in April 1971, declared ‘equality, human dignity and social justice’ as the three basic rights of all citizens of this country. The National Constitution adopted in 1972 not only upheld these as the basic principle, but also brought in equity measures, to ensure advancement of the disadvantaged groups of our population. Subsequently, a welfare based law was enacted in 2001, replaced by a human rights-based law, the Rights & Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013 formulated under the spirit and content of the CRPD. Also recognizing the additional plight of people with neuro-developmental disabilities (NDD), a supplementary law was enacted, giving birth to a National Trust for the development of persons with NDD, such that they too could become a meaningful and proactive part of an inclusive Bangladesh.

In recent times, the SDG has been formulated with a key motto – “Leave No One Behind”! It has taken into cognizance that despite all our collective efforts, some people in every corner of the world still remain disadvantaged and discriminated against due to various factors. And one of the largest section of people are the people with disabilities. They first and foremost need to be accepted as an integral part of human diversity. As the society has been built without keeping them in mind, the barriers need to be broken to facilitate their participation. And their presence and their contributions need to be recognized within the society, on an equal basis with others.

AFID applauds this spirit undertaken at the global level, and so the conference theme therefore has been declared as **“Acceptance, Accessibility, Inclusion - A key towards Sustainable Development”**.



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The objectives of the conference:

- Ensure acceptance, inclusive and quality living conditions of persons with intellectual disabilities.
- Ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment opportunities and decent work for persons with intellectual disabilities.
- Establish an inclusive society for the sustainable development of all, including persons with intellectual disabilities.