**Questionnaire on the provision of support to persons with disabilities**

1. Please provide information on the following services that are available for persons with disabilities in your country, including data on their coverage, geographic distribution and delivery arrangements, funding and sustainability, challenges and shortcoming in their implementation:
2. Personal assistance

*In the Republic of Korea, personal assistance service is legally based on the Act on Personal Assistance Services for Persons with Disabilities with the aim of supporting the independent living of persons with disabilities, reducing their family’s financial burden, and enhancing their quality of life. According to the Welfare of Disabled Persons Act, the beneficiaries of such services are those with severe disabilities who are registered to be between the 1st to 3rd disability grades and are of the ages 5 to 65. For persons with severe disabilities who are over the age of 65, personal assistance services are provided only when needed, as they are not eligible to be beneficiaries or are about to leave their current residential, medical, correctional, or therapeutic custody facilities.*

*Compared to the year 2015, the total number of service beneficiaries increased by about 6,000 and the total service amount was also raised by about 7 million KRW in 2016[[1]](#footnote-1). Now, more than 1,000 organizations are providing personal assistance services nationwide.*

1. In-home, residential and community support

*With the enactment of the Act on the Protection of Rights and Support for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, the government of the Republic of Korea designated public guardian corporations to support the families of persons with developmental disabilities. The government also supports families[[2]](#footnote-2) with a child with disabilities (between 1st and 3rd disability grades) aged 18 years or younger by providing care service or a rest program for their parents (e.g. family counseling, etc.).*

*Persons with disabilities are eligible for the following types of residential support: residential tenancy, residential subsidy, and a residential environment improvement project.*

* *The beneficiaries of residential support are selected based on their income level. Residential support provides services separately for the unprivileged, including persons with disabilities.*
* *Residential tenancy, which aims to mainly provide residential security for the low-income group, is provided according to income level identified by an asset survey, and preferentially targets persons with disabilities. Anyone who is eligible for this service can apply online, or by visiting a community service center. Then, the beneficiaries are selected by the Korea Land and Housing Corporation, its provincial branches, or the Seoul Housing and Communities Corporation.*
* *The unprivileged who are not beneficiaries of the residential support above are able to receive the following services: permanent rental housing, and assessment and improvement of their indoor environment.*

*The government of the Republic of Korea has made efforts to build a disability-friendly residential environment, provide customized residential services based on the type of beneficiary’s disability, and meet their remodeling needs.*

1. Support in decision-making, including peer support

*The government of the Republic of Korea provides public guardians to persons with developmental disabilities who have difficulties with the decision-makings for their independent livelihood in a community. This service has helped the beneficiaries protect their rights and build a human network, ultimately preventing their human rights from being violated.*

*Public guardianship service targets registered persons with developmental disabilities who are of 19 years of age or older and living in a household with an annual income that is less than 150% of the average national household income. Those with other types of disabilities could also be covered if the municipalities or the courts recognize their need for a public guardian.*

*If a persons with disabilities in needs applies for the public guardianship service, the public guardianship training institute reviews the application and recommends a number of guardians appropriate for the type of service the applicant requires to the municipalities (e.g. city authorities, county authorities, district office, etc.), which will finally select a guardian for the applicant. In more detail, social workers or governmental officers first closely evaluate the applicant’s environment, communication ability, and reason for the need of this service before applying for the service for the subject. Then, when the call for public guardianship is accepted through the municipalities, the courts will confirm the need of and will to use this service with the subject, the public guardian candidate, and the social workers or governmental officers before finally confirming the appointment of a public guardian.*

1. Communication support, including support for augmentative and alternative communication

*The government of the Republic of Korea provides persons with hearing disabilities with communication support services such as sign language interpretation, texting, communication relay, assistive devices for communication (activated by touch or voice), and support for employees.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Service provider** | **Number** | **Service details** | **How to provide** | **Remarks** |
| Sign language interpretation | National Association for the Deaf | 194 | Interpretation service or emergency service for communication of persons with hearing disabilities | Sign language interpreters | - No service at night and on weekends  - Lack of communication service personnel |
| Community rehabilitation centers for the deaf | 1 |
| Communication relay | National Information Society Agency | 1 | - Texting relay service  - Video relay service  - Communication relay service for persons with linguistic disabilities | Phone, computer or mobile phone | - Provides service at night and on weekends  (24 hours a day)  - Available to persons with linguistic disabilities  - Provides a voice-activation service |
| Support for employees | Korea Employment Agency for the Disabled &  National Association for the Deaf | 3 branches | - Sign language interpretation for communication with peers without disabilities  - Answering phone calls, recording dialogues | Sign language interpreters | Supports employees with disabilities only |
| Assistive devices for communication | Korea Employment Agency for the Disabled | 1 (KEAD) | Assisting communication for the life at work | Provides assistive devices for free | Supports employees with disabilities only |

[Table 1] Current status of communication support service providers[[3]](#footnote-3) in the Republic of Korea

*The Act on the Protection of Rights and Support for Persons with Developmental Disabilities states that important information or legislation which may significantly impact the rights and duties of persons with developmental disabilities shall be distributed in an easy-to-understand format, and promoted through educational institutes.*

*Against this backdrop, the Ministry of Health and Welfare has been distributing policy brochures in an easy-to-understand format and communication manuals to public offices since 2012.*

*Also, the National Information Society Agency (NIA) provides subsidies for persons with disabilities who lack access to information and communications physically and economically to purchase IT-based assistive devices in order to encourage their social inclusion and narrow the information gap between persons with and without disabilities.*

*The NIA subsidizes as much as 80% of each assistive device and distributes various devices and special software classified by disability types (e.g. visual impairment, hearing impairment, language disabilities, physical disabilities, brain lesion disorder, etc.).*

1. Please explain how persons with disabilities can access information about the existing services referred to in question one, including referral procedures, eligibility criteria and application requirements.

*According to Article 32 of the Welfare of Disabled Persons Act, persons with a disability registration card shall be provided with necessary welfare information from the government. In the case of a change in or loss of the disability grade of a person, he/she shall also be provided with the new information on his/her rehabilitation and independent living, as well as on the different types of support services available for him/her with his/her new status.*

*The information may be delivered through the head of city authorities, county authorities, or district offices that issued the subject’s disability registration card.*

*In case of social welfare services (e.g. community services, residential services, etc.), the beneficiaries are selected based on certain criteria (e.g. asset level, demographic factors, etc.)*.

1. Please elaborate on how these services respond to the specific needs of persons with disabilities throughout their life cycle (infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and older age) and how is service delivery ensured in the transition periods between life cycle stages.

*In the Republic of Korea, different agencies provide necessary services needed at different stages of life to persons with disabilities. The government of the Republic of Korea has supported policies and services from a disability-inclusive point of view based on each stage of life (e.g. pregnancy and childbirth, infancy and childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, late adulthood, etc.). The services above cover various fields such as education, employment, residence, health, finance, and culture.*

*Article 26 of the Infant Care Act (Preferential Provision of Infant Care Services for the Vulnerable) stipulates that infants with disabilities, just as infants without disabilities, can go to child-care centers or kindergartens. Specifically, the Act states that “principals of child-care centers established by the State, local governments, social welfare corporations, and other non-profit corporations… shall preferentially provide infant care services for babies, disabled infants, and infants of multicultural families…”*

*Infants with disabilities are currently able to receive care services from the child-care centers established by the State, local governments, and individuals, or special child-care centers only for the disabled.*

*The key services provided at the transition stage of life are the courses offered at special schools that focus on a special field of study, or vocational adjustment training programs that target high school students with disabilities that are jointly planned by special schools and vocational rehabilitation facilities. Also, a lifelong education program is offered to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.*

*The Ministry of Health and Welfare also published a welfare service guidebook and opened a website (*[*www.bokjiro.go.kr*](http://www.bokjiro.go.kr)*) to help persons with disabilities easily access necessary welfare information categorized by stages of life.*

1. Please provide information on the number of certified sign language interpreters and deafblind interpreters available in your country.

*The government of the Republic of Korea manages sign language interpreters and interpreters with hearing disabilities[[4]](#footnote-4) through a state-certified test for better communication between persons with hearing disabilities and persons without disabilities.*

*Article 19 of the Framework Act on Qualifications stipulates a sign language interpretation test as a state-certified test. Until 2016, 12 tests have been held, certifying a total of 1,384 sign language interpreters nationwide.*

*The National Association for the Deaf manages interpreters with hearing disabilities to facilitate communication between persons with hearing disabilities who do not know sign language and persons without disabilities. Until 2016, 14 tests have been held.*

*Now, 195 sign language interpretation centers are being operated nationwide.*

*The Korean Sign Language Act, which defines sign language as an official language in Korea, was enacted in February 2016 and came into force in August 2016.*

1. Please provide information on the existence of any partnership between State institutions and private service providers (e.g., non-governmental organizations, for-profit service providers) for the provision of support to persons with disabilities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Classification** | **Name of institutions or providers** |
| **State institutions** | Ministry of Health & Welfare, National Rehabilitation Center, National Pension Service, Social Security Information Service, Korea Disabled people’s Development Institute |
| **Private service providers** | Central Support Center for Children with Disabilities and Persons with Developmental Disabilities, disabled person’s organizations (e.g. Korea Federation of Centers for Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities, Korean Association on Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities, National Association of Community Rehabilitation Centers, etc.) |

*A partnership between government institutions and private service providers has been discussed and built in the Working-level Meeting of Policy Coordination Committee for Disabled Persons and other consultative bodies on disability policies.*

1. Please describe to what extent and how are persons with disabilities and their representative organizations involved in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of support services.

*The 5-year National Plan for Disability Policy comprehensively designs and plans the provision of support services to persons with disabilities in the Republic of Korea. Various ministries (e.g. Ministry of Health & Welfare, Ministry of Employment & Labor, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure & Transport, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism, etc.) have participated in preparing this plan every 5 years. Persons with disabilities and their representative organizations have also submitted proposals for the design of this plan. All of these procedures have their own legal grounds.*

*The participation of persons with disabilities in policy making and service provision is ensured in Article 3, 5, 11 and 53 of the Welfare of Disabled Persons Act and Article 8 of the Act on the Protection of Rights and Support for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, as below:*

* *Art. 4 of the Welfare of Disabled Persons Act: Persons with disabilities shall have a right to preferentially participate in the policy-making processes related to persons with disabilities.*
* *Art. 11 of the Welfare of Disabled Persons Act: The Policy Coordination Committee for Persons with Disabilities shall be established under the control of the Prime Minister to establish comprehensive policies for persons with disabilities, to coordinate opinions of the Ministries concerned, and to monitor and evaluate the execution of such policies.*
* *Art. 5 of the Welfare of Disabled Persons Act: In determining and executing policies for persons with disabilities, the State and local governments shall converge opinions of persons with disabilities, their parents, spouses and other guardians. In such cases, the participation of the persons concerned shall be ensured for convergence of such opinions.*
* *Art. 53 of the Welfare of Disabled Persons Act: The State and local governments shall take necessary measures for independent living of a person with severe disabilities by his/her own decision, such as personal assistance service including dispatch of a personal assistant, supply of assistive devices for persons with disabilities, or various other conveniences and supply of information, etc.*
* *Art. 8 of the Act on the Protection of Rights and Support for Persons with Developmental Disabilities:*

1. *Persons with developmental disabilities shall decide their residence area, agreement or denial on medical treatment, exchange with others, use of welfare services, and the types of services they need.*
2. *Anyone shall not judge the decision-making abilities of persons with developmental disabilities without sufficient information or assistance for their decision-making.*
3. *If there are enough reasons showing that a person with developmental disabilities does not have enough abilities to make a decision, his/her parents are able to support the decision-making. In this case, the parents shall try to bring best results to the person with developmental disabilities.*
4. Please provide any other relevant information and statistics (including surveys, censuses, administrative data, reports, and studies) related to the provision of support to persons with disabilities in your country.

*The “National Survey on Persons with Disabilities” has been conducted every 3 years to evaluate the current status of persons with disabilities and their welfare needs and status, and further to use the results as basic data for disability policy making. Also, “Statistics on Disability and Health,” a statistical report on the health of persons with disabilities published in 2016, analyzed the inter-relatedness among disability registration information, the data of National Health Insurance Service, and the data of Statistics Korea. This report will also be used as basic data to make health policies for persons with disabilities.*

*The Act on Promotion of the Transportation Convenience of Mobility Disadvantaged Persons stipulates the establishment and implementation of plans to improve transportation convenience of persons with restricted mobility every 5 years. Based on this Act and relevant ordinances, city authorities and provincial governments have conducted surveys on persons with disabilities to effectively establish this plan. In this context, the persons with restricted mobility include persons with disabilities, the elderly, pregnant women, persons traveling with a baby or an infant, children, and those who experience physical difficulties when moving.*

*Furthermore, the Employment Promotion and Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act states that a survey on types of occupation and labor of persons with disabilities shall be conducted every 2 years, while the level of enterprise activity by persons with disabilities shall also be surveyed every 2 years in accordance with the Promotion of Disabled Persons’ Enterprise Activities Act. The results of these surveys above are used as nationally-recognized official statistics.*

1. According to the Korean Health and Welfare Statistics Website ([www.date.kihasa.re.kr](http://www.date.kihasa.re.kr)), the number of service beneficiaries and service amount have consistently increased as below:

   39,373 persons / 30,747,000,000 KRW (as of Feb. 2013)

   48,786 persons / 49,057,000,000 KRW (as of Feb. 2014)

   54,091 persons / 56,847,000,000 KRW (as of Jan. 2015)

   60,412 persons / 64,268,000,000 KRW (as of Jan. 2016) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The target families are confined to those whose annual income is not more than the average national household income. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Sources: “2014 National Survey on Persons with Disabilities” (Ministry of Health & Welfare, Korea Institute for Health & Social Affairs), Website of Korea Employment Agency for the Disabled (http://www.kead.or.kr) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Interpreters with hearing disabilities assist communication between the persons with hearing disabilities who do not know sign language and persons without disabilities. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)