**Asia Pacific Disability Constituency Meeting**

**Date: 1st June, 2023**

**Participants:**

1. Rose (CINDC)
2. Dar Dem -ololt, Mongolia
3. Toru Tara
4. Villaney Remengesau (Co-Chair PDF)
5. RI Korea
6. Michael Bleasdale
7. Nelly Caleb
8. Trevor Carroll
9. Abia Akaram
10. PT Lim
11. Rhema Misa
12. Ofa Leka
13. Pema Chhogel, MoE, Bhutan
14. Rhonda Faragher (Down syndrome Australia)
15. Ujala Sarfaraz
16. Alex Enano
17. Julia APRN
18. Yuenwah San
19. Nalini Vaz
20. Akram
21. Pakistan
22. APDF Secretariat
23. GLRA Shibu (India)
24. Lanieta Tuimabu
25. June Riemer
26. Deepti Karan Weiss
27. Krisha Gahatraj (Nepal)
28. Co-Chair Latoa
29. Khomraj Sharma
30. CEO Setareki Macanawai
31. Smitha Sadasivan
32. Simon Delaiono

**Talking Points:**

**Julia**

APRCEM operates as a platform for civil society organizations to engage. Sectors in our organizations as well as some regions in Asia and the Pacific discuss relevant issues for many and sustainable development goals as well as the development agenda. The UN and at the same time to our own campaigns within our sectors.

The agenda of this meeting are shared by, as proposed by, is to need to discuss on the current situation about, APRCEM and leadership transition, as well as the current plans and the future plans of the persons with disabilities constituency.

Our constituency moving forward. So, it's for us to have a deeper discussion about the context of the current transition that is happening in APRCEM with the new leadership, that will take place by this month, hopefully, at the same time.

**Co-Chair Lany:**

PDF assumed its role in 2018, and this was after a meeting in China. CEO Seta had raised for recognition of the Pacific in the Asia Pacific space.

PDF has held its role for the past 5 years.

Members to determine whether PDF to remain as the focal point or nominate another subregion.

Meeting is being held as we did not meet the 20% threshold in the last election process.

**Julia**

PDF’s role over the past years as, the focal point for, constituency, in its first term as well as, its current, junction now that, we are in the process of whether we are affirming PDF for a second term, as the focal point.

Whether they are affirming PDF as the focal point for OPDs representation for the APRCEM.

**Alex**

The Election Committee is composed of the advisory group of the APRCEM. So, they are composed of colleagues from 5 different organizations from 5 different subregions. Calling for nominations for all constituencies and subregional groups. The Committee then looks at the results of the nominations. Last year, the Committee found very few nominations from the entire APRCEM. Thus, the election committee extended the nomination 3 times last year then the nomination was closed at the start of the last quarter of 2022.

From the disability constituency, only one nomination was received and that was for PDF. So the voting process was moved forward.

Once we went to the voting process and then it was also the election committee who processed all of these.

When once the results were out, we found out that, the PDF who is only the sole nominee. Also, during the election last year, we did not reach the 20% threshold of the entire disability constituency.

**Challenges:**

It was found that there were a lot of bounce back emails.

The COVID pandemic made it difficult to coordinate online.

Many of our colleagues many of the civil society organizations are more focused with their groundwork with their country level work, their grassroots coordination.

There was difficulty convening the regional coordinating committee in a regular basis to thoroughly discuss what should we do.

For those constituency that did not reach the threshold. We came to an agreement that since we cannot just leave the post and attendant.

We had a joint resolution, the regional coordinating committee of the APRN. For those that did not reach the 20% threshold, it was then decided to be appointed as interim contact points. The position is temporary. In this position, it's only for a maximum of 6 months. And within that 6 month period, there should be a process of affirming the interim contact point of that constituency of or of that sub regional group. Should any objections arise during that period, it will be up for the constituency to talk about it.

Should you request another round of elections within your constituency? Then, that to be part of today’s meeting agenda.

And then, whatever will be the decision of the majority of the disability. We will be endorsing this to the election committee. Because, if you're going to have another election process, it should be the election committee of APRCEM who will be facilitating that.

**From Chat:**

**Abia:**

No one voted as were discussing within the Disability Constituency, extend the role of the PDF. That’s why it was less than 20% as discussions occurred within the constituency.

**Michael:**

R&IA strongly supports the continuation of PDF in this role

**Deepti:**

I would like to kindly suggest that we be fair and provide equal opportunity to respective regions in order to strengthen regional cooperation, good governance, inclusion, diversity, and equity, for solidarity and sharing the spaces/platforms. Strategic foresight is extremely crucial in our decision making in order to build partnerships within the Constituency and not break it. Bearing in mind that PDF has done a good job in the past through our focal point, we still need to be fair to Asia and the organizations within the region which could perhaps lead as the next secretariat and focal point on a rotational basis. This would enable other organizations fair opportunity to exhibit their leadership while we all support together as a Constituency. Or through proper election. Thank you!

**Alex**

Give updated database latest by Monday. 7 Calendar days for nomination and 7 Calendar days for the Election.

**Questions:**

The election or the representation of each constituency to APRCEM is not as an individual but by organization. The election process must be authorized by your respective organizations.

Looking at the emails that have come in, a couple of organizations have volunteered to stand, so what does that mean? What are our next steps? There are a couple of organizations interested in taking on the role, at least 3 or 4 organizations. Also, a majority seems to be supporting PDF to continue the role. Thus, are there any results from the exchange of emails and discussions.

For the 3 or 4 organizations that volunteered or nominated themselves, what is the formal voting process versus the email voting process?

**Abia:**

No one had voted or come up with nominations, thus the role was extended to PDF which was why we did not meet the 20% threshold.

Look at how we can open the nominations and also get like other constituencies to also vote and not only the disability constituency. This can that other constituencies can also get more representation and opportunities can also get more representation and opportunities.

The Pacific needs more space and I think it's a good it was a good idea that we can share those responsibilities with the Pacific and now if others of region want to take the lead we can just open our responsibilities with the Pacific and now if others of region want to take the lead, we can just open and I think Pacific is still eligible to take the responsibility but have a join kind of like open call and then everyone can apply for that.

**Smitha:**

Sharing same sentiments as Abia. Any other way for a democratic process for the elections apart from what has been already discussed?

**Alex:**

Appoint an organization as interim contact point as there are big events coming up especially the Peoples Forum and APFSD. The Interim Contact will only serve 6 months and in those 6 months, a contact point must be chosen.

The Election Process is not facilitated by the Constituency but will be done by APRCEM Elections Committee and APRN. Opening nominations again and this will up to June 9th and the nominations will close on June 9th.

There are 7 Calendar days of voting. So, but this, we need to get up approval from the elections committee first because they'll be the one who's going to facilitate.

**Julia**

Quite a number of organizations showing interest, in assuming their role for the focal point, it warrants to and dating these, initiatives from the members and call for another nomination.

For that focal point then another round of elections to be decided by the constituency and who will be decided by the constituency and who will be the.

There are 17 constituencies in the APRCEM. All of the these constituencies and sectors we ensure that they are represented and aside from that we have.

There are also sub regional groups. So we have, Northeast Asia. Right now, I think, the focal point is, from Greenpeace.

Previously the focal point for northeast Asia was from SDGs network. And then, we also have Southeast Asia. So previously the focal point of the Southeast Asia. The Southeast Asia constituency has affirmed Climate Watch Thailand represented by one month to be the focal point of Southeast Asia.

For South Asia, they're still in the process of affirming the interim contact point.

For Central Asia, it's Ga from Kyrgyzstan.

For the 17 constituencies, there are farmers, disability, women, youth, and children, people living in conflict and disasters, people leaving with HIV. We also have the NGO constituency, migrants, indigenous peoples, social and community enterprises, trade union and workers, older people, LGBTQIA plus and urban port constituency and science and technology constituency.

Members to send through their updated contact information who is authorized to be the representative from the Regional Coordination Committee. This will not only be useful for the disability constituency but the Regional Coordinating Committee.

**Lanieta:**

Seeking clarity on the nomination by organization to reach the 20% threshold for the voting process. Alex to elaborate on the 20% thresho.d

**Alex**

The 20% threshold is based on the total active members of the disability constituency. So for example, if, an estimate. This is just an estimate if there's an estimated 100 organizations from the disability constituency. The elected focal point should get at these 20 votes.

**Co-Chair Lany**

Telesia has updated database and there are 200 plus members. There should be 200 plus members but not organizations.

**Telesia**

In previous meetings, proper disaggregation of members to go out showing impairment type and the organization the person is representing. Also the individual representing their organization, must always provide feedback to their organization. On the database, there are individual emails and as well as organization emails.

**Action:** Telesia to provide Co-Chair Lany with the updated list and the updated data to be with the Alex and Julia by Monday so they can commence the nomination process.

**Julia:** Calling for nomination for those interested in the focal point role can either nominate themselves or nominate someone or other organizations as focal point for persons with disabilities.

There are also other constituencies also undergoing the election process. The Pacific constituency is also undergoing election. You can also nominate yourselves or other organizations you think could be fit for the role. Link has been sent in chatbox.

**Co-Chair Lany**

Reiterating that the APRCEM membership is organization base, not individual. Telesia to sort emails. Telesia given the weekend to confirm and update the emails that will be used.

PDF has been helping with updating the database for the APRCEM. Verification process will be by PDF and APRCEM that will ensure these organizations are OPDs and are eligible to vote.

There are two databases – one is the original database of the APRCEM that has been in use since 2014 and have been updating another database just last month. The two databases will be merged together. It will be ensured that, all member organizations in that database will be, represented in, we can, send everyone the, communication regarding the nomination and then the communication regarding the election.

Discussed in the APRCEM meeting, the disability constituency is not restricted for only for organization of persons with disabilities but for in for organizations who are having interest or advocates for disabilities. It is an open, for organization-based, the individual who have interest or advocates for disability, and equity.

**Alex**

The Asia Pacific, regional CSOs engagement mechanism or the APRM, it is composed of more than 600 member organizations in the entire Asia and the Pacific region. Representing each constituency, it composes the regional coordinating committee. And then among themselves they can be elected, they can elect, I mean, their co-chairs and the secretary.

Formal announcement on, who is the official focal point of its constituency, including their content will be sent out shortly too.