



Advancing the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities worldwide

RI Global Newsletter, December 2018

RI's Governing Assembly gives Haidi Zhang a new mandate to serve as president until 2024

Rehabilitation International's Governing Assembly has given Haidi Zhang a new mandate which will enable her to serve as RI President until 2024. This was decided at the RI Annual Governing Assembly held in Berlin on November 5, 2018. A call was issued by the RI Secretariat in May 2018 to solicit nominations for the position of President Elect. However, no nominations were received from RI's National Member-Organizations which resulted in the decision to extend Madame Zhang's tenure for four more years after her first term expires in 2020. Thanking colleagues for their support, Haidi said she never sought the title and the glory it brings. But she considered serving another term to be able to continue her work to make a difference in the lives of Persons with Disabilities across the world. Her Government in China has been very supportive of the work she does globally as RI President and she wanted to see the results of her efforts by having six more years to further her work in RI. Haidi was similarly re-elected recently for a third term as Chairperson of the China Disabled Persons Federation (CDPF).

Meanwhile, the mandate of Jan Monsbakken, RI's Immediate Past President, has similarly been extended until 2022; Francois Perl was appointed RI Vice President for Europe with Nick Carey as the Deputy Vice President; Eckehard Froese was appointed Chair of the Leisure, Recreation and Physical Activities (LRPA) Commission with Jan Johansen as Vice Chair; and Roy O'Shaughnessy was appointed as Vice Chair of the Policy and Services Commission.

The RI Executive Committee Members congratulated Haidi Zhang on her new mandate and applauded her leadership in advancing the work of RI Global in the changing global disability and development landscapes.

Seven more organizations joined RI before 2018 ended

The RI Executive Committee has approved the application for membership of seven more organizations from Asia and Africa before 2018 ended. They are as follows: Action for the Community Development Center as RI's National Member Organization (NMO) in Vietnam; the Hanoi Association of People with Disabilities of Vietnam also as an NMO; and the Disability Rehabilitation Association based in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, also as MMO.

The RI EC similarly accepted four new members based in Africa as follows: Disabled Women in Africa (DIWA) based in Malawi as NMO; Community Based Rehabilitation Africa Network based in Uganda as NMO; Enlight Abilities Zambia as Associate Member Organization (AMO); and the Youth with Disabilities Empowerment Platform based in Mauritius as AMO.

RI President lists priorities for 2019

Haidi Zhang, President of Rehabilitation International, underscored the work priorities of RI in 2019 as follows: (a) to work closer with the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Labor Organization (ILO), UN-Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UN-Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific; the UN-Economic and Social Commission for Africa; and the Committee for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, among others. She also highlighted the need to sustain RI's high visibility in the work of the UN in New York, it being an organization in consultative status with the UN.

Other priorities for 2019 include more research work in rehabilitation in partnership with specialized institutions to increase the professional appeal of disability work in the community level; carry out RI's work in a "down-to-earth" manner by mobilizing more resources to fund pilot research projects that can be shared with the rest of the world as RI's contribution in the global work in rehabilitation, disability and development; Africa will continue to be a focus in RI's work in terms of improving capabilities and building capacities; and take more proactive effort to improve internal capacity i.e. RI website upgrade for accessibility; increased engagement in activities related to the International Symbol of Access (ISA) which is RI's greatest contribution to the world; keep every opportunity to publicize RI's work and enhance achievement of its mission; promote the rights, equalize opportunities and be inclusive of persons with disabilities in

all aspects of RI's work going forward; ensure more participation of persons with disabilities in RI's work at different levels (community, national, regional and international); and promote rejuvenation of RI by working for the realization of goals that are shared among its members across the world.

RI Global: Around the World

WWDA joined the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign

Compared to our peers, women with disabilities experience significantly higher levels of all forms of violence more intensely and frequently and are subjected to such violence by a greater number of perpetrators. To raise awareness, encourage action in eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls with disabilities, Women with Disability Australia (WWDA) joined the global campaign #HearMeToo End Violence Against Women and Girls. To learn more about the campaign, please visit: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/end-violence-against-women>

Related reading: [Five things you didn't know about disability and sexual violence \(UNFPA\)](#)

Pazapa renewed its commitment to improving the life of children with disabilities in Haiti on the International Human Rights Day

As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights turn 70, the International community celebrate the principles of equality, justice and human dignity it enshrined on 10 December 1948. In Haiti, only an estimated 5% of the approximately 400,000 children with disabilities have access to inclusive education or specialized medical care, and the stigma surrounding disability often relegates these "invisible children" to the furthest margins. Pazapa, dedicated to supporting the treatment, education and development of children with Disabilities in Haiti and to promoting acceptance within their community, renewed their commitments on the International Human Rights Day.



Children with disabilities attending the Pazapa Center for Children with Disabilities, Jacmel, Haiti

The RI Australia Network Annual General Meeting was held on 19 December

The RI Australia Network's 2018 annual general meeting was held on 19 December 2018. At the meeting, Mr. Michael Fox, Director of Rights & Inclusion Australia reviewed the principal activities taken place in 2018, and noted that RIA activities continued to focus on progressing the goal of more accessible and housing in Australia, and to work in close collaboration with the Australian Network for Universal Housing Design (ANUHD) advocating changes to the NCC/BCA (Building Code of Australia) to mandate minimum accessibility standards for all housing. He also highlighted the 6th Housing Forum hosted by Australian Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Alastair McEwin in Sydney. More information is available at: www.riaustralia.org

RI Indonesia shared its successful story at the 2018 Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities

The 2018 Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities (GITC) was held from 8- 12 November in New Delhi, India. The 2018 GITC performed an exemplary role both as an IT powerhouse and using it to solve various disability issues both domestically and internationally. This year, the

representatives from Indonesia have won a number of awards, and Indonesia was awarded 2018 IT Global IT Leader for the second time.



The Indonesian team won the best e-Creative Challenge at the Global IT Challenge 2018.

Dr. Retty Irwan, RI National Secretary for Indonesia, shared his insights as the team leader for the Indonesian representatives this year at the GITC. He noted that the ICT development in the country was a collaborative effort from both the government and NGOs, and the national policy on ICT had also referred to the fulfillment of the rights of persons with disabilities. With such favorable environment, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations were able to actively collaborate with local governments and schools to prepare for the CITC. Upon the return to Indonesia after the GITC, Dr. Irwan and RI Indonesia have already took action to follow-up the good practice learnt from the event and further expand ICT in the country for persons with disabilities, including conducting regeneration of instructors at national and regional levels; continuing the online training of ICT and providing services not only to youth with disabilities but also instructors at the IT Center at YPAC National.

RI Global News to Use

UN launched its first-ever flagship report on disability and development

[The UN Flagship Report on Disability and Development 2018](#) was launched on 3 December 2018, which coincides with the annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities, marking an important step for the social, economic and political inclusion of all, including persons with disabilities, as promoted in the Sustainable Development Goals.



The Commemoration of the International Day 2018 at the UN Headquarters

UN Secretary-General António Guterres remarked in his foreword for the report that “despite the strong commitment expressed by the international community to an inclusive, accessible and sustainable 2030 Development Agenda, persons with disabilities continue to face significant challenges to their full inclusion and participation in society and development.” The flagship report reviews the progress made to date on disability in the context of the 2030 Agenda, and highlights the growing number of good practices that can create a more inclusive society in which persons with disabilities can live independently.

RI Global: Mark Your Calendar

7 March 2019, European Conference for Socio Professional Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation International (RI), the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) and the Belgian National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance (NIHDI) will host the European Conference for Socio Professional Rehabilitation on 7 March 2019 in Brussel, Belgium. The organizers of the

Conference now welcome interested experts, scholars and persons with disabilities submit abstracts of their research by 1 February 2019. For registration of the conference, please email to: secr-uitk-dirgen@riziv.fgov.be

[26-28 June 2019, Macau, RI Asia and Pacific Regional Conference 2019](#)

Under the theme “ Together, leaving no one behind, in disability inclusive and rights-based progress” the 2018 RI Asia and Pacific Regional Conference will organize plenary sessions focused on key issues including disability inclusive disaster risk reduction and post disaster rehabilitation, gender and disabilities, education, work, employment and social enterprise, and accessibility as well as international frameworks such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Incheon Strategy adopted for the Asia and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

RI video-documentary shows work in 2017-2018

The recently released video documentary shows the various activities carried out by RI executives and members from 2017-2018 under the leadership of RI President Haidi Zhang. It is the consolidated executives report of the organization to its members and partners which highlights the activities of the RI President, other members of the Executive Committee and the Secretariat in New York headed by Secretary General, Venus Ilagan. The video which can be viewed at the RI website, may be used by RI members to show to their constituencies and partners, the work that was carried out by the organization at various levels in the last two years. Members are encouraged to submit to the Secretariat in New York, reports on their activities which can be included both in the RI website as well as in the 2019 consolidated report.

Accessible Meetings Launched

The Accessible Meetings Project of GainingEdge, BestCities Global Alliance and Rehabilitation International was officially launched at an international conference of the global meetings industry that was held in Dubai in November 2018. The project aims to promote among members of the conference and meetings industry, inclusion and access for persons with disabilities in their field of work. A pioneering initiative of its kind, this project hopes to encourage the industry to adopt

measures to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate, be heard and counted in conference and events that are held across the world.