Message from the Executive Director

Dear GPDD Friends,

We are sending this note to call you to take action to mobilize your countries to assume their highest commitment to disability inclusive development.

As you know, the General Assembly convened a one-day high-level meeting on disability and development (HLMDD) at the level of Heads of State and Government on 23 September 2013, the Monday before the start of the general debate of the sixty-eighth session. The HLMDD will result in a concise, action-oriented Outcome Document in support of the aims of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities. Although the HLMDD will be one of the most important benchmarks for disability inclusive development, only connecting the outcomes of the HLMDD with other mainstreamed development debates will ensure disability inclusion in the Post 2015 development framework.

Particularly, it would be important this time:

1) Urge governments to include members with disabilities in their country delegations for the HLMDD and subsequent meetings at the UN

2) Urge governments to include disability concerns in all discussion related to the Post 2015 framework, in particular
   a. the Opening of the General Assembly Debate on September 24, 2013 and
   b. the Special Event on MDGs on September 25, 2013.

The urgent action we propose is not owned by the GPDD. You can freely use the materials we share with you and name it your campaign. You can create your own materials, as well.

SUGGESTED STEPS AND MATERIALS

A) Review reference documents to be abreast of the background

B) Identify relevant officers. We suggest: Office of the President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Social Development or equivalent, Minister of Environment and Infrastructure or equivalent
According to the 2011 National Census, there are 120,000 hearing impaired people in Uruguay, a country of 3 million people. About 30,000 of them have severe hearing limitations or total deafness. Amongst them 2,500 are children and young people under 30.

Lack of appropriate materials in their own language, social taboos, numerous barriers to information and communication put young people with hearing impairments at a higher risk of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. A new set of sexual and reproductive health and HIV education resources has been prepared by the Inter-American Institute on Disability and Inclusive Development (iiDi) in collaboration with UNFPA, UNICEF, the Partnership for Child Development (PCD) and the deaf community in Uruguay.

The approach for producing these materials was highly participatory. “We [deaf teens] are all in the same situation in which a lack of information leads to unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.” said Maria Emilia, one of the participating young ladies. “People think that the disabled do not have a sex life. Why wouldn’t we? It’s not our fault if we make mistakes if there’s no sex education or sexual health information,” she added.

The activities were an opportunity to engage deaf adolescents as health promoters and advance their preparation for future peer education initiatives in Uruguayan Sign Language. Engaging local deaf organizations has also been key to distributing these materials through deaf institutions and networks in the near future.

The materials include posters, post cards and QR Code-messages—a modern digital media content which has been increasingly used in inclusive projects aimed at deaf people. Have a look and share the materials from: (cont. on column on page 6)

We hope these materials are useful for you to take action in your country!

And please, don’t forget to let us know of your efforts by sending an email to the GPDD Listserv, posting on our Facebook group, or sharing it on Twitter by using the hashtag #makingDisabilityVisible.

Single actions are a drop in the ocean, but together we can create a river of change.

Best regards,

Maria

“Please, don’t forget to let us know of your efforts by sending an email to the GPDD Listserv”

Nothing about young people without young people! A participative approach to health and sex education in sign language in Uruguay

From the Inter-American Institute on Disability and Inclusive Development

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Regional Conference on Inclusive Education
Tigre, Argentina. August 30 – September 1, 2013

According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which has been signed by 155 and ratified by 130 countries in the world, state parties are obliged to ensure equal access for all to primary and secondary education, vocational training, adult education and life-long learning. Every student, regarding of his/her abilities, has the right to receive an education in the way most appropriate to his/her needs. The main goal of any education should be to foster students’ participation in society, help them grow a sense of dignity and self worth and assist them in developing their personality, talents and creativity, regardless of their abilities. Unfortunately, in too many countries children with disabilities are still left behind and prevented from accessing such opportunities.

To further promote the implementation of inclusive education in Latin America, the GPDD has been co-sponsoring a three-day event in the municipality of Tigre, in the surroundings of the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The conference has been organized by the Argentinean Foundation “Fundacion Tigre por la Inclusion”, with the support of the Municipality of Tigre.

The event saw a range of international experts on the topic flying to the town of Tigre, and sharing their knowledge and experience with the more than 1800 participants, mostly teachers and schools directors from the Latin American region, and Argentinean authorities. Speakers included representatives of the World Bank, the Government of Portugal, the Government of Costa Rica, the Government of New Brunswick, Canada, and the Organization of American States.

The sessions were organized around three main thematic axes, touching improvements and challenges at the policy level, in the engagement of key stakeholders such as teachers and families, and in the practical implementation of inclusion in the classroom. Sessions provided an excellent occasion for participants to learn together and also to get to know each other and establish the basis for future cooperation. The spirit of the conference and the enthusiasm of all the participants can be summed up in the words of Mr. Jody Carr, Minister of Education of the State of New Brunswick, Canada: “I am very happy to be here. We need to be learning together from the experiences of both communities. I would be delighted to be able to implement a joint initiative with the municipality of Tigre.”
International Centre for Evidence in Disability launched at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

By Myroslava Tataryn

The International Centre for Evidence in Disability at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine was launched in June, 2010. The Centre draws together a diverse range of researchers, with broad skills and knowledge in the field of disability. Our focus is on developing tools, techniques and evidence about disability, and we have a particular interest in health. We place a strong emphasis on translating research outcomes into practice and are closely linked to several international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and agencies to help achieve this goal. The majority of our research is undertaken in Low and Middle Income Countries. Current research involves the conduct of comprehensive disability surveys in Cameroon and India, and the assessment of the prevalence of childhood disability in Malawi. We are also investigating the inclusion of children with disabilities in the famine relief efforts in Turkana, and developing parent-led packages of care for children with Cerebral Palsy. Sustainability of services is of critical importance, and we are investigating ways to strengthen health systems and measure sustainability within the areas of eye health and physical rehabilitation. We are also developing a teaching programme on disability within LSHTM, including a short course and MSc study unit to be offered from 2013.

ISPO Delivers Statement on Disability at the World Health Assembly

From International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics

The Being a nongovernmental organization in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO) has been invited to attend the 66th World Health Assembly (WHA) held in May 2013 in Geneva (Switzerland) and delivered a statement on disability.

The statement was given in support of the WHA-adopted resolution on disability, which endorses the WHO World Report on Disability and calls on the WHO to prepare a comprehensive action plan that puts forward measurable outcomes, based on the evidence provided in the WHO World Report on Disability and in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

ISPO used the opportunity to highlight the pressing need for increased prosthetic, orthotic and physical rehabilitation services worldwide. In addition, ISPO strongly encouraged the WHA to prioritize and promote a global initiative to increase access to assistive devices including prostheses, orthoses, wheelchairs and other mobility devices for persons with disabilities and older people.

Please read ISPO’S Statement here, or watch the video of the recording.

In case of any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the ISPO Head Office at ispo@ispoint.org.
The Spiral of Disability

By Dr. M. P. Boraian, Professor Centre for Disability and Development, Gandhigram Rural University, Tamil Nadu, India

Experience of the Gandhigram Rural University (South India) in implementing JTUC-LIFE (a Japan sponsored project among the differently abled persons in the rural areas) reveals that persons with extreme disabilities had a high risk of discard and death, especially after the death of their primary caretakers. Certain families had a spiral of disability where the spouses, their siblings, sons and daughters as well as their partners had the same type of disability. Very few women got married, mostly among their relatives due to social compulsions, which further added to the probability of more disabled children.

Besides the conventional causes, the project found that medical negligence in the delivery process had also resulted in the newborns acquiring cerebral palsy and mental retardation. The pangs of disability was found to be higher among poor families, those living in hilly and remote areas, and those having lone or no care takers. The leprosy affected persons experienced the worst consequences of disability due to abhorrence and abandonment by family, difficulties in using public transportation for healthcare and social exclusion from the community, all of which compounded their disability. (cont. on column on page 6)

“Very few women got married, mostly among their relatives due to social compulsions, which further added to the probability of more disabled children.”

UNAPHAC meets the High Commissioner of the United Nations for Human Rights

From CAFOD, member of UNAPHAC

In the past months, UNAPHAC has been busy contributing to the development of a joint document of the Organization of Civil Societies of Cameroon addressed to the High Commissioner of the United Nations for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay. The document was delivered to Ms. Pillay during a working session with her that was held at the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (CUNDHD-AC) on July 1, 2013, during her official visit to Cameroon.

Among the concerns identified and highlighted in the document were: the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the inclusion of the specific needs of persons with disabilities in all development programs and in the implementation of the MDGs; the proposal to consider disability inclusion one of the conditions to be met by project proposals in order to be funded, on the model of issues such as environment and gender.

During the event, UNAPHAC seized the occasion to illustrate, through the presentation of concrete examples, what is meant by the expression “Special Needs of people with Disabilities”. Also, UNAPHAC raised awareness on the fact that the inclusion of disability concerns is essential to achieve the full participation of all citizens in the life of their Community / Society.
Disability Literacy - Methods of Knowing

From by Alberta O. Akrong - PhD Candidate - University of Toronto/OISE

While billion dollars in aid are slated worldwide for development interventions, disability issues seem reticent from programme discourses.

Notions of disability and representation in Ghana a country ingrained in tradition, culture and spirituality, are interpreted inadvertently through lenses of ableism at the detriment of disabled bodies. Disability socially proscribed here is ultimately perceived along bodily forms and not on cognitive abilities.

Such unconventional binaries involuntary undermine human ingenuity since objectivity that generate relationships, opportunities, life chances and choices demise because criticality subjectively focuses on the body than self. But holistic nation-building demands human critical mass yet, in most cases, disabled persons are marginalized from the mobilization process.

The challenge is Ghanaians themselves should be change agents articulating ways of knowing to reshape perceptions towards disability. But how can Ghanaians grapple with the peculiarities of ableness with our current 46.3% non-literate population? The issue requires a level of knowledge which I envision hinges on disability literacy that could inform practice and performance.

Disability literacy is distinctive from disability and literacy. Whilst the latter deliberate on inclusive learning, the expectations from the former is to channel awareness-creation, mainstreaming and training to inform psycho-social behavior. Sensitization, language use, public/civic engagement, media, resource provision, infrastructural development, inclusion, accessibility, advocacy, well-being should be its focus.

Truth is the Disability Bill passed by Ghana’s parliament will not implement itself. Initiatives for advancing broader implementation policy practices must be present to guarantee solutions.

On that note, I speak in solidarity with the 10% disabled population in Ghana. The congress no doubt marks a significant step for professionals in the region and worldwide which will positively impact not only the P&O and rehabilitation community but also the patients in India and beyond.

ISPO is proud to have organized a congress that will benefit the region and the community and already invites P&O and rehabilitation professionals to come to the next ISPO World Congress hosted in Lyon, France on 22-25 June 2015.
CBR Introduction courses now available in French

From Enablement and BIKASH

One exciting new development can be announced from the side of Enablement, with the expansion of its training offer with CBR courses in the French language. In collaboration with Light for the World, DAHW Senegal, CBM, Handicap International and The Johanniter International, course materials have been translated into French and the first CBR Introduction courses are already scheduled for Senegal - October 2013 and Burkina Faso - June 2014, to be followed by a Training of Trainers course in CBR.

Enablement’s training calendar for the year 2014 is therefore more extensive and rich than ever. In partnership with BIKASH-Nepal a number of courses have been scheduled to be delivered in Nepal: CBR Introduction Course (March ’14 first half), Training of Trainers in CBR (March ’14 second half) and the NEW Disability Rights and Advocacy Skills Training (May ’14) and Monitoring and Evaluation Course (September ’14). More information can soon be found on www.bikashnepal.org, and already on www.cbrtraining.com. In The Netherlands the renowned Management and Leadership Course in CBR will be organized in April ’14.

Find more information on our French and English courses on www.enablement.nl, where you will also find details on our publication “The Dream of Inclusion for All”. A number of copies are still available!

“A group of fifty PWDs [...] has been provided with prostheses and orthoses prepared through locally available, low-cost articles, such as soda bottles, PVC pipes, etc.”

A single framework for sustainable Rehabilitation services with available daily-use materials

From the National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped

Lack of reliable research hinders the development and implementation of effective Rehabilitation policies and programs. A newly developed Rehabilitation system has been developed to deliver effective, sustainable and individual care to PWDs. This system can be used in poor developing nations, and it is currently successfully applied in rural India.

The project developing this new system consists in the provision of assistive devices, which play a key role in individual mobility, as confirmed in the World Report on Disability and in the UNCRPD. The advantage of conducting the rehab process through a scientific management tool is the possibility to collect research data and information to stimulate further research and evidence based practice.

The aim of this project is to formulate a single framework for Rehab services. A group of fifty PWDs has been short listed and has been provided with prostheses and orthoses prepared through locally available, low-cost articles, such as soda bottles, PVC pipes, etc. Each PWDs is registered in the newly developed database, which thanks to a data analysis software, provides information regarding the next steps of the rehabilitations service. In this system, service providers’, funders’ and the patient’s concerns are identified at every stage of the program, so that the follow up and rehab service remain continuous and uninterrupted. This long term Rehab support with assistive devices reduces expenditures for health related services.
About GPDD

The Global Partnership for Disability and Development is an informal alliance to promote and facilitate the inclusion of disability issues and persons with disabilities in mainstream development policy and practice in developing countries. It is a large international partner network composed of diverse individuals and organizations, including national governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, development banks, UN agencies, development NGOs, disabled persons’ organizations (DPOs), NGOs working in the field of disability, universities, foundations and enterprises.

Contact info:
The World Bank, MC 7-701
1818 H Street, N.W
Washington, D.C. 20433 USA

Phone:
+1 (202) 473-9353

Fax:
+1 (202) 522-3252

E-mail:
mreina@worldbank.org

Website:
http://wwwgpddonline.org

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Women with disabilities in Development

Working Group on Disability and Disasters