EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The second Forum of the Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities (GPcwd), held in the UNICEF House, New York in September 24, 2013, convened nearly 280 members for a one-day meeting designed to appreciate recent achievements of the Task Forces and national partnership efforts, to agree on a governing structure, and to further the development of the 2014-2015 Action Plan.

Inspirational messages were delivered through keynote addresses by: Dr. Nicholas Alipui, Director of Programmes, UNICEF; Mr. James D. Wolfensohn, former President of the World Bank; and, Ms. Amina Mohammed, Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning.

The four original Task Forces (Education, Nutrition, Humanitarian Action and Assistive Technology) and one newly approved Task Force (ECD) presented their achievements highlighting the following: a compendium of sample policies and programmes that address nutrition of children with disabilities; children with disabilities were included in the 2013 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction; successful advocacy for disability to be specifically mentioned in the latest Humanitarian Omnibus Resolution; establishment of an on-line community of practice around inclusive education of children with disabilities; and, successful advocacy for disability to be incorporated into the Global Partnership on Education (GPE) monitoring framework.

Plenary discussions followed with suggestions for additional Task Forces on Access to Health (including NCDs and Physical Activity), Child Protection (Deinstitutionalization/Alternative Care), Leadership and Mentoring Children and Women.

The session on national partnerships showcased the application of the newly completed guidelines featuring examples of government, civil society and UN leadership efforts from Kenya, Rwanda, and Viet Nam. These results were encouraging and helped to set a standard for national partnership development. The plenary discussion revealed the need to focus on girls with disabilities, concern for issues of equal partnership, funding issues, and the engagement of the private sector.

A GPcwd governing structure, voted on using the on-line survey conducted prior to the Forum, was presented and approved. Draft vision and mission statements were discussed and largely agreed upon. However, on-line discussions will follow after the Forum to collect wide-based input before finalizing.

The afternoon sessions focused on further identification of priority actions for the GPcwd 2014-2015 work plan. Three experiences were presented on how to increase...
and leverage actions to ensure government commitment and engagement (Norway), promote participation of children and adults with disabilities (Ugandan NGO), and increase influence of public opinion using social media (Philippine NGO). The presentations highlighted the effectiveness of innovative approaches such as ‘flash mobs’ and parades, use of national statistics and data to influence decision-making and policy formulation, and the importance of the preparation and protection of children and youth for participation through the use of media platforms to share their experiences. The plenary discussion resulted in over 30 suggested actions for the Partnership, including: more action-research, sharing of promising practices, distribution of profiles of courage featuring the struggles of young people with disabilities; the call for more involvement of families and caregivers; self-advocacy, among others.

The last session of the day helped to consolidate the output of the Forum into a framework for required resources and commitment essential for the Partnership to ensure the specific needs and rights of children and adults with disabilities are inclusive in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Participants were reminded that although 2012-2013 progress was possible with very limited resources and structure, more than the will to work together is needed to sustain Partnership effort to ensure that disability issues are included in the Post-2015 Development agenda, targets and indicators. Notable among the commitments announced are: UNICEF’s support for the functioning of the Task Forces (250,000 USD); UNPRPD 100,000 USD to promote participation of DPOs; Human Rights Watch for a communication team and multimedia; and, the willingness to host national partnerships by World Vision International (10 countries) and Plan International Egypt (1). Dozens of organisations volunteered leadership of and participation in Task Forces, national partnerships and youth councils.

The exercise of mapping and securing resources for the 2013-2015 GPwcd workplan will continue with a view to achieve the right mix of funds, resources and leadership to adequately respond to challenges identified during the 2013 Forum.

The one-day Forum concluded with an evening reception sponsored by UNICEF and the by the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) featuring the launch of the publication, “Towards and Inclusive and Accessible Future for All”, and closed with an inspirational performance by 16-year old Phuong Anh from Viet Nam, who is known as ‘Crystal’.
# ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>Assistive Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE/CIS</td>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoSP</td>
<td>Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESA</td>
<td>Department of Economic and Social Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPO</td>
<td>Disabled People Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRR</td>
<td>Disaster Risk Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPP</td>
<td>Global Programme Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPE</td>
<td>Global Partnership on Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPCwd</td>
<td>Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPDD</td>
<td>Global Partnership on Disability and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLMDD</td>
<td>High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communications Technologies sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Disability Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDDC</td>
<td>International Disability and Development Consortium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INEE</td>
<td>International Network for Education in Emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRC</td>
<td>Innocenti Research Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD</td>
<td>Leonard Cheshire Disability and Inclusive Development Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPcwd</td>
<td>National Partnership on Children with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCAP</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDESA</td>
<td>United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNPRPD</td>
<td>United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Children with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. BACKGROUND

More than 1 billion people or 15% of the world population live with disabilities. Children with disabilities and their families face physical, social, economic and attitudinal barriers that impede them from full and free participation as equal members to society. The universal principals set forth in the CRC, CEDAW and CRPD have provided the inspiration and the foundation for the movement towards inclusion for children and adults with disabilities. After decades of work to change attitudes and approaches to disability that would promote full equality and participation of persons with disabilities in society, GPcwd emerged from a series of partners’ meetings in 2011-2012. The first point of action was an urgent call to bring international focus on the factors which impede development and realization of rights for children, young people and adults with disabilities.

An initial call to partners was made in 2011 in New York, during the Fourth Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COSP-CRPD), followed by a small consultation held in conjunction with the UNESCAP and Leonard Cheshire Disability Conference on Disability-Inclusive MDG’s and Aid-Effectiveness in March 2012. The partners agreed on organizing a major event around the Fifth COSP-CRPD in September 2012. This inaugural Forum of the GPcwd involving more than 180 registered participants was held 14-15 September 2012 at UNICEF House in New York. The Partnership agreed that in order to realize inclusion and participation for persons with disabilities, they must be included in all development processes and, now more importantly, in the emerging post-2015 development framework. It was equally understood that the Partnership would promote a balance between including issues related to children with disabilities in all development efforts and delivering disability-specific programmes within sectors. The GPcwd inaugural forum established four task forces with the aim to influence the mainstreaming of disability rights in global child-focused agendas – namely nutrition, education, humanitarian action and assistive technology. As priority, the Forum underscored the need to stimulate partnership action at the country level.

The second Forum, 24 September 2013, was again strategically planned to accommodate the presence of partners in New York to attend the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development. Over 270 members from 41 countries attended the Forum which showcased the achievements of 2012-2013 and examples of national partnerships, reviewed the mission and agreed on the structure of the GPcwd, brainstormed on what can be done to effectively influence the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and began to map out strategic
resource requirements. Inspirational keynote addresses were delivered by Dr. Nicholas Alipui, Director of Programmes, UNICEF; James D. Wolfensohn, Former President of the World Bank; and Ms. Amina Mohammed, Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning. Contributions from notable personalities included the Minister of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, H.E. Ms. Inga Marte Thorkildsen, from Norway and Minister of Family and Social Policies, H.E. Ms. Fatma Sahin, of Turkey. The day-long Forum was powered by the dynamism of young advocates representing CSOs and DPOs speaking about personal experiences.

UNICEF, as the leading agency for children's rights and in consultation with the “Core Group”¹, has been leading the Secretariat to guide the development of the structure for the Partnership and direction of the GPcwd. With over 270 organizations (including international NGOs, national/local NGOs, Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs), governments, academia and the private sector) and guided by a rights-based approach, the Partnership provides a platform for advocacy and collective action to ensure the rights of children with disabilities are included and prioritized by both the Disability and Child Rights Movement.

Preparations for the one-day Forum was carried out in close collaboration with the Core Group and on-line surveys were used to widely collect views, ideas and opinions from all partners. A number of videos were shown during coffee breaks with a view to encourage discussion on disability issues and networking among partners.

¹The core group refers to the main partners include the International Disability Alliance (IDA), International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), Global Partnership on Disability and Development (GPDD), Leonard Cheshire Disability and Inclusive Development Centre (LCD), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), UN Partnership on the Rights of Children with Disabilities (UNPRPD), UN Inter-Agency Support Group on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (IASG) and the UNICEF Office of Research.
2. KEYNOTE MESSAGES

Four distinguished speakers addressed the Forum, each leaving participants with messages that will guide and inspire the work to be done in 2014-2015 GPcwd workplan.

Dr. Nicholas Alipui, the Director of Programmes at UNICEF opened the Forum with a reminder that the Post-2015 Framework will find difficulty meeting the challenges of social transformation and poverty eradication without the understanding that all children have unlimited potential. “Seeing disability before seeing the child destroys that potential”. GPcwd is well positioned to play a vital role to unlock global potential and change the attitudes that keep people with disabilities from realizing their dreams and our dreams.

Dr. Alipui supported the Partnership’s call for a twin track approach whereby efforts should focus on specific targets and indicators that address the rights of people with disabilities, as well as, the strategic cross-cutting action. Further, he noted that deliberate attention needed to reveal and track characteristics of inequality, such as those that people living with disabilities experience and represent. People with disabilities encounter barriers in every aspect of their lives and therefore development programmes should aim for a norm where nations conceive and implement policies and programmes in health, nutrition, early childhood development, education, child protection, among others, that are inclusive and benefit all children, particularly those that need these actions the most. The measure of success should be reflected in the extent to which our collective actions have helped transform deeply entrenched stigma, discrimination and other barriers into inclusion, tolerance and acceptance.

Former President of the World Bank James D. Wolfensohn, speaking through a video message and from his own personal experience as the President of the World Multiple Sclerosis Federation 25 years ago, recognized the need for the international community to broaden an approach to lift disability issues out of the shadows. He continued his commitment to these issues during his term at the World Bank encouraging governments to wake up to the obvious needs of persons with disabilities, 15% of their populations. Whilst persons with disabilities, particularly children received little or no attention in the last MDGs, he urged the Forum to come together from all the various perspectives (government, UN, civil society, private sector, etc.) to advocate and ensure specific statements, specific goals, and specific opportunities are included in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Mr. Wolfensohn encouraged the GPcwd to use its international alliance to look through the issues of weak capacity and look at the issues of human responsibility in order to fulfill a long held hope for commitment, leadership and action on behalf of children with disabilities.
Ms. Amina Mohammed, Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, shared the importance of having a conversation about the world people want and transforming those voices into a framework to shape the Post-2015 Development Agenda. She stressed the important role of the GPcwd to ensure the voice of children and adults with disabilities are heard. To do so GPcwd must “push the boundaries... make those demands [until] you are heard and get the quality that we need for the next development agenda”. She argued emphatically that the future strategy must target the most marginalized groups and focus on eliminating inequalities. She reminded the Forum that 15% of the world’s population has a disability and that 80% of them live in developing countries where one in ten are children and it is estimated that over 1 million children over the age of 14 are living with a disability. She put great emphasis on the fact that although the figures are high they are outdated and unreliable and masks the reality of the situation.

She left the participants with a compelling message regarding the importance of data in order to “take the mask off faceless people” in order to see the specifics of the types of disabilities and where they are”. Invisibility serves to render children uniquely vulnerable. The Post-2015 Agenda must look at the different levels and abilities for countries to address disabilities and target country level effort to achieve steps towards a sustainable development agenda. In taking the agenda to the national level, it must be one that reflects local conditions and can be implemented in sync with global principles and policies. The role of civil society in partnership with governments, UN, academia and the private sector is key and GPcwd is uniquely positioned to bring it all together with national partnership initiatives. She speculated that the emerging Post-2015 development agenda is much more complicated and will require strong and effective partnerships such as GPcwd in order to deliver sustainable gains on the economic, environment and social agendas.

These keynote messages left participants with the confidence that, in partnership, disability can be integrated across all sectoral programmes, all partnerships and in all operations both globally and at field level. It was concluded that the GPcwd can make a difference in ensuring that no child or adult with disability would be denied an equal chance at life. These messages renewed the promise and commitment to a combined effort to break down the barriers.

The Forum was followed by a joint UNICEF and UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) High level Reception with opening remarks by Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF. The reception was the last of three high-level events around the issues of children and adults with disabilities that also included the UN High-Level Meeting on Disability and Development and the GPcwd Forum. Anthony Lake reminded attendees that humanity has greatly benefited from the genius of persons with disabilities. Yannis Vardakastanis, Chair, International Disability Alliance, reiterated the need for meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the
formulation and implementation of development policy at all levels. Other brief statements were made by: Ms. Shamshad Akhtar, Assistant Secretary General, UNDESA, Ms. Rebecca Greenspan, Associate Administrator, UNDP, Ms. Heidi Hautula, Minister of International Development, the Government of Finland, and, Ms. Henrietta Bogopane Zulu, Deputy Minister, Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities, Government of South Africa. The reception called for action for the implementation of the recommendations of the High Level Meeting on Disability and Development and launched the publication, “Towards an Inclusive and Accessible Future for All”.

The evening fittingly ended with performance by 16-year old Phuong Anh from Viet Nam. Born with osteogenesis imperfecta, or ‘glass-bone disease’, a genetic disorder causing fragile bones, she is known as ‘Crystal’ and has inspired millions with the messages in her songs.

3. OVERVIEW OF FIRST YEAR OF ACTIVITIES

The first session of the day, moderated by Nora Groce, Director, Leonard Cheshire Disability and Inclusive Development Centre, focused on highlights and challenges of the Task Forces and national partnerships. The remarkable growth of the Partnership over the short period of 2 years is due to the effort of the hundreds of committed organizations and individuals around the globe who, through the GPcwd have ably coordinated limited time, resources and funding. The achievements of the Partnership are characterized by the hard work of four task forces and the tremendous effort of emerging partnerships at the national level.

The overview of first year of activities was presented by the four original Task Forces (Education, Nutrition, Humanitarian Action and Assistive Technology) followed by a presentation on achievements of the Task Force on Early Child Development (ECD), which informally formed during the reporting period. Responding to the on-line survey conducted prior to the Forum, partners voted to include ECD as a new Task Force. Hence, during the Forum the Task Force was officially approved. These presentations were followed by a discussion period where the following contributions and questions were made:

- There is an absence of the voice of front-line service workers who must work to deliver a high quality of services in accordance with the principles set forth in the CRC and the CRPD. They are part of the equation and we can't carry out the Partnership mission without them working hand-in-hand with families and communities supporting children with disabilities;
- How are school-based health interventions represented within the composition of the GPcwd Task Forces;

2 Published by Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
What strategies are foreseen for achieving the goal of quality and complete education when it comes to serving children with disabilities living among the rural poor?

Are the Task Forces working on targets and indicators for the Post-2015 Development Agenda that adopts inclusive education as a goal?

Please include a balance of partners from all regions of the world in Task Forces and governance bodies;

Suggest a focus on access to health care as well as there are enormous disability-based disparities in health and health care access;

Suggest task force on access to health and physical activity which should include access to lifesaving healthcare services;

A task force on leadership training and mentoring for children with disabilities is suggested;

How might GPCwd benefit from a new initiative with NGO/UNICEF/UNESCO fostering corporate engagement with education initiatives (value added, collected impact, etc.);

How are GPCwd Task Forces considering transition planning and independent living skills to improve post-school outcomes for children with disabilities;

As adolescents with disabilities are among the most marginalized, suggest a Task Force on adolescence;

Where does the young people sector come in and how do they participate in the Task Forces;

Propose a Task Force on the prevention of (avoidable) disabilities;

How do we ensure that all efforts of the Task Forces are covering and including the specific situation of children with disabilities living in institutions? These children are at very serious risk of all forms of abuse and neglect;

Suggest a specific Task Force for disability statistics and mapping;

What are the plans to intentionally meet the needs of immigrant and refugee families who support children with disabilities;

Suggest someone look across all Task Force activities to ensure that important themes are represented (families and parents, children in institutions, leadership training of youth and children, gender issues, etc.);

Suggest strategies to be identified for knowledge management across all Task Forces for sharing of practical guidance and resources to implement and act on global commitments;

The issues and questions raised during the plenary were considered at the Task Force meetings that took place on 25 September. Below is a brief summary of the activity reports presented at the Forum and a brief summary of the Task Force meetings. Additional details are available in the 2012-2013 Annual Report distributed at the Forum and available on line. (http://www.unicef.org/disabilities/index_65775.html).
**Task Force on Education:** It is not unusual for policy agenda setting and key results at the strategic level to take considerable time. Co-lead by UNICEF and UNESCO, the leadership for this task force promoted partnership for change by identifying and acting on common goals to create synergy. The task force set high goals for influencing global partnerships on education and articulated indicators to be positioned within existing implementation plans. An advocacy document was developed and introduced during the meeting of the GPE’s Board of Directors in November 2012 in Paris (attached) and as a result of discussions during the May 2013 meeting of the GPE Board the GPE Implementation Plan now includes an outcome specific to inclusive education.

UNICEF now has an indicator on children with disabilities within its new Strategic Plan/corporate framework, paving the way for rapid implementation. The task force was able to make timely contributions to the Post-2015 dialogue and to the High Level Meeting on Disability and Development in early 2013. Additionally, they were able to lay the ground work for creating a knowledge learning network for the implementation and sharing of good practice, including the development of a survey on Article 24 that will bring together the collective experience of the Partnership and help to shape global guidance on the issue and to strengthen the influence of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Thirty members of the Task Force met on 25 September to identify areas of comparative advantage and synergies to support the goals and work plan of the Task Force. It was decided to expand the number of co-chairs from 2 to 4 in order to include representation from DPOs and CSOs in the core governance structure of the task force. Co-chairs now include UNICEF, UNESCO, International Disability Alliance (IDA) and International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC).

The co-chairs were charged with drafting a terms of reference for the restructured task force. Further, the meeting decided to build working groups to ensure adequate guidance on the four priority areas of concern:

1. Pedagogy and learning - Charmaine Crockett, University of Hawaii, interim focal point
2. Learning environment - Mona Indargiri, Harvard Disability Project, interim focal point
3. Teachers and Education Personnel capacity - Paula Frederica Hunt, UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office, interim focal point

Two cross-cutting sub-groups were also formed with focal points to be appointed:

i. Policy and legislation and a post 2015/ Global Campaign for Education Advocacy Group- Coordinator Gabriele Weigt

ii. Knowledge Management – portal hosted by UNESCO for now

The working groups are scheduled to meet in November to appoint a focal point for knowledge management, prepare a survey to map member geographical areas of intervention and comparative advantages to ensure an even sharing of TF responsibilities. Each of the working groups will propose 2 or 3 priority actions for the 2013-2015 Education Task Force work plan.

**Nutrition Task Force:** issue of the lack of evidence and information linking nutrition and disability emphasized, the 2012-2013 Nutrition Task Force work plan focused on two bodies of work: 1) a survey and mapping exercise, and, 2) building a stronger evidence base. The first group collected information on policies and programmes from about 50 organizations using on-line survey tools and was able to assess seven or eight key activities on nutrition and children with disabilities. The second group was extremely successful in pulling together information and producing two evidence-based papers one of which was published in the Lancet Global Health Journal in September 2013.

As the smallest task force, ten members met to identify next steps needed to clear unfinished business from the 2012-2013 work plan, develop strategies to strengthen outreach to mainstream nutrition organisations. The group prioritised the following actions for the 2013-2015 work plan:

1. Strengthen TF potential by establishing leadership and operations mechanism for the TF and building participation by the mainstream nutrition and feeding/swallowing sectors. Clear communication and collaboration across other TFs.
2. Broad distribution of TF-generated papers and survey summary to disability, nutrition, feeding/swallowing sectors (with a possible re-opening of the survey in multiple languages prior to or in concurrently with summary distribution).
3. Build relationships and collaboration with mainstream nutrition and feeding/swallowing sectors.
4. Establish evidence base for nutrition programmes targeting CWD to leverage in advocacy efforts.

In follow-up to the meeting, the group will develop a concrete action plan for 2013-2015, which will be shared with other TFs in consideration of opportunities for collaboration.
**Task Force on Humanitarian Action:** Inclusive humanitarian action was identified as a major focus for the 2012-2013 work plan. Two major achievements were recorded for the first year of task force effort. Firstly, disability was included in the latest Humanitarian Omnibus Resolution (2012). Secondly, in close collaboration with the Disaster Risk Reduction Network for Asia Pacific, important presentations were made by a panel of children on what persons with disability need during a disaster. A policy paper on disability and Disaster Risk Reduction was also produced and circulated.

Six task force members came together to examine strategies for more efficient advocacy, knowledge management and communication. The proposed to change the name of the task force to Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction. The meeting acknowledged the plethora of written material available, much produced by GPCwd partners, on the disability and humanitarian action and proposed to assemble a data base that can be shared with task force members. The meeting ended with a decision for the task force to meet virtually on a quarterly basis and to exchange information, draft and monitor the 2013-2015 work plan.

**Task Force on Assistive Technology:** This task force was created based on the belief that every child needs extra is assistive technology. Hence the task force emerged after the first GPCwd forum. They developed coordinated messaging on assistive technology to influence the outcome document of the HLMDD and to advance knowledge and understanding in this important area, a discussion paper on assistive technology has been finalized.

Four members met to examine how best to promote awareness about the need for and benefit of assistive technology. After a review of the discussion paper, the group decided on ways to enhance the distribution and use of the discussion paper: include user’s involvement including family, develop an attractive communication strategy to create awareness at all levels – users to policy makers, inclusion of repair and maintenance aspect, linkage with ICT and accessibility, replacement as child grows, prevention of secondary disability, making a case for investment – and, address cost effectiveness of inclusion rather than cost of exclusion, quality and affordability. For the 2013-2015 work plan, members agreed to use the paper to expand its membership and develop awareness materials to promote the need for and benefit of AT. They also agreed to include and engage the private sector in the AT task force. They agreed to focus on some minimum numbers of most essential assistive devices, and work towards greater access to those devices, as a first step. They will meet virtually every six months.

**Emerging and New Task Forces**

During the 2013 GPCwd, there was an urgent and insistent call for the creation of additional task forces including Early Childhood Development; Access to Health,
Child Protection (Deinstitutionalization/Alternative Care), and Leadership & Mentoring for Children and Women.

**Task Force on Early Childhood Development (ECD):** The Plenary approved the establishment of the task force on ECD and a group of 19 members met on 25 September to review the informal work that had been done during 2013 which was presented at the 2013 Forum. Working informally in 2012-2013, the task force surveyed ECD needs assessment and conduct advocacy effort using the “invest early, invest smart and invest for all” approach embracing the notion of “triple twin tracking”. While there is familiarity of mainstreaming disability as a twin tracking process, the ECD “third twin track” involves targeting the youngest children of the first cycle of life.

There are currently nearly 35 GPcwd members involved in the ECD task force. The core group of 19 met before the 24 September Forum to review new initiatives and collaboration, projects underway, and objectives, strategies and tactics for the ECD task force. Their 2013-2015 work plan is under development.

**New Task Force on Access to Health (including NCDs and Physical Activity):** It is determined that GPcwd can play an important cross-sectoral role on issues of disability and child survival and development particularly on the coordination of reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health-related initiatives driven by UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA. A concept note proposing the new task force on Access to Health was developed and was positively reviewed by the GPcwd. However discussion is underway on how to bring together the members of the Nutrition task force as well and ensure close collaboration with the task forces on ECD, AT, Education and Humanitarian Action.

**New Task Force on Child Protection (Deinstitutionalization/Alternative Care):** There is important evidence that shows that children and youth with disabilities are significantly more likely to fall prey to physical, sexual and psychological abuse than their peers without disability. They already face a sense of powerlessness, social isolation and stigma which increases their vulnerability to violence and exploitation. A child who needs assistance with intimate care such as washing and dressing are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse, for example. School bullying is another form of abuse because they have trouble defending themselves or in reporting abuse. Unfortunately exploitation and abuse involving children with disabilities is too often perceived to be less serious. Advocacy is needed to change the attitudes of family, community, government as well as service staff working in areas that interface with child protection issues (the judicial system, in juvenile justice, etc.). Articles under the CRPD (articles 7, 9 and 23) clearly states that children with disabilities have the right to be cared for by their parents because institutions often fall short in providing the sufficient and quality medical, rehabilitative and educational care.
New Task Force on Leadership and Mentoring Children and Women: The gender dimension of disability receives little attention. It is commonly acknowledged that girls and women with disabilities may have limited access to essential services such as health care, education and vocational rehabilitation. Girls and women are more often exposed to the risk of acquiring a disability more than men and boys due to neglect and harmful practices such as early marriage, among others. Further, girls and women who do not have disabilities themselves are affected by disability because they are often disproportionately given the responsibility for care for persons with disabilities in their families and communities. Integrated strategies are called for to ensure that efforts addressing disability are balanced and equitable.

National Partnerships

The first session of the day ended with presentation of three examples of national partnerships. Guidelines for developing national partnership were finalized and distributed by the Secretariat earlier this year. Jean-Claude Adzalla, Regional Director for East and West Africa, Deaf Aid Kenya, SCO began with a presentation on applying these guidelines through civil society. With a view to champion the national partnership for children with disabilities Deaf Aid Kenya took on the Ministry of Education calling multiple stakeholders (DPOs, civil society and government) for a meeting to reflect on the meaning of inclusive education. Momentum was picked up and led by a ministry official responsible for access to education issues. The first meetings resulted in establishing specific needs for children with disabilities and removing the entrenched ideas of low expectations and “few needs for these few children”. The number of groups participating grew in number and type into a comprehensive group requiring a governing structure.

With a structure in place goals and objectives were defined articulating what the group stands for and establishing rules of engagement. A constitution has been drafted and the process of registering the partnership is underway. Some funding has been obtained and the group has instituted thematic groups and tasks forces to ensure equitable division of the work load and accountability (groups include policy, advocacy, watchdog network, research, action and knowledge). The young national partnership remains loose to enable each organization to act independently on their individual mission yet collectively to address the specific education needs of children with disabilities. The government has invited the group to sit on the validation committee of the national education support programme where they will undoubtedly make a difference in how the government includes disability issues in planning the use of the national budget for education.

The second country-level experience was presented by Ms. Ramatou Toure, Chief of Child Protection, UNICEF Rwanda. UNICEF assisted the government with the organization of the National Children’s Summit to promote the participation of young children and youth in national planning and policy activities. The Summit was attended by the President, the Prime Minister and other high level decision makers.
The children spent considerable effort to identify key concerns and issues to present and discuss during the Summit where government officials were called upon to respond and elaborate on how they plan to address their concerns. Further their commitments form part of a “performance contract” which national institutions are later evaluated against. In 2012 UNICEF facilitated the inclusion of the most marginalized children, including children with disabilities. Coordination and logistics required special attention as children represented communities from across the country, particularly the most rural and remote areas.

No one organization could have done this alone, so UNICEF’s convening role was central to the success in bringing together government, CSOs, national and international NGOs, schools, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) and many other organizations who shared the goal of furthering the realization of rights for children with disabilities. The government was summoned to respond to children with disabilities who presented their situation and asked for help. The national forum argued for children with disabilities to be included in every child forum taking place in the country and at every level. A child with a hearing impairment was elected as President of the Forum sending a strong message to the general public in Rwanda. UNICEF Rwanda learned two important lessons: firstly, it is important to collaborate and harmonize efforts to achieve results at the highest level over the short term; secondly, it is extremely important to use existing advocacy platforms, existing resources, and existing organizations to achieve success in promoting the rights of children with disabilities. The established partnership serves to guide the research, mapping and service delivery activities ongoing in Rwanda. UNICEF Rwanda has since established a multi-sectoral task force to monitor and accompany the evolution of the national partnership.

The third and final example of national partnerships was presented by Nguyen Hai Huu, Director-General of the Viet Nam Child Care and Protection Agency. The Viet Nam experience showcases the use of national partnerships in operationalizing the 1991 law on protection and education for children featuring the social allowance support, health insurance and a policy on rehabilitation for children with disabilities. Under these policies children with disabilities are ensured social security, affordable housing, health care, education and rehabilitation. Operationalizing this policy was carried out in partnership with the National Programme on Child Protection constituting a strong basis for additional policy work for children with disabilities. Partners include civil society, UN and NGOs who meet regularly to review policies on social inclusion and take on responsibilities for working with various Vietnamese organizations on issues affecting children with disabilities. As a result Viet Nam has enacted specific policies for persons with disabilities in the areas of education, healthcare, rehabilitation and transportation. Viet Nam plans to ratify the CRPD in 2014.

The plenary was opened for discussion on the three examples of national partnerships with the following concerns emerging:
What counts as “equal partnership”? How are decisions made in an equal partnership;

Much is being done in terms of global partnerships – policies, programmes, etc. However children with disabilities in developing countries still can’t go to school or use public toilets;

When the money runs out, often organizations “run out” as well. Finding funding for work on national partnerships remains problematic for DPOs to support government’s commitment and engagement.

How to include the concerns of girls with disabilities? What strategies are in place to ensure gender concerns are cross-cutting in Task Forces and national partnership plans;

Can Kenya provide more details on the functioning of the task forces briefly mentioned in the presentation;

How have/can the Task Forces and national partnerships engage the private sector. For partnerships that are usually resource-limited, what success to they have, if any with corporate social responsibility programmes of new and innovative strategies.

The Education Task Force responded with examples of discussions with Microsoft on how they can support work under way adding that reaching out to private sector must be done strategically. For example, use of technology as a tool for pedagogy for inclusive education. There must be win-win feature in the discussion and a good match of the sector’s product with the specific needs of children with disabilities.

**GPCwd Structure, vision and mission**

Moderator, Rosangela Berman Bieler, Chief, Disability Section, Programme Division for UNICEF, recalled September 2012 at the inaugural Forum where the Partnership discussed an idea, a vision for a partnership. With little more than the will to work together like “hummingbirds, each bringing a beak of water to extinguish a fire”, each partner has contributed to the growth and development of the GPCwd over the past year. Because people decided to work together, the number of task forces has doubled; there are examples of national partnerships lead by NGOs, UN and Government. There are calls for action from Asia Pacific and other regions. The strength of unity behind the GPCwd logo has shown that much can be done without a formal structure and less than adequate resources. With the understanding that the Partnership mission will be challenging if GPCwd is to influence the Post-2015 Agenda, a structure and consolidated mission and vision is key. There is much enthusiasm and boundless energy for the planning and work ahead and an agreed upon structure and mission will help to guide GPCwd work in 2013-2015. The Partnership has had much success with an informal structure and mission but now it is important to have a governance structure that includes mechanisms for review and accountability. To this end, the Secretariat conducted a web-based survey to collect the voices of partners on the issues of GPCwd logo and structure. The survey presented 3 options for the GPCwd structure:
1) This structure would feature a Secretariat, a Steering Committee, Task Forces, National Partnerships and Youth Councils.

2) In this structure, the Secretariat would have the same duties as in Option 1, but these duties would be divided into a Split-Secretariat, which means the Secretariat would be based in two locations. The structure of the Split-Secretariat is somewhat similar to the structure of INEE’s Secretariat.

3) In this structure, two main bodies would be a Policy Board and Management Committee. The Policy Board would set the strategic direction and provide programmatic oversight for the Task Forces. The Management Committee would review the Policy Board’s proposals for Task Forces, make the final decisions for Task Forces and be responsible for identifying and facilitating inter-linkages between the different Task Forces.

Although response to the survey was less than optimal, 82% of the respondents voted for option one with no votes for option two and only 6.9% of the respondents’ votes going for option three.

Under Option one, the structure approved by the Forum, the responsibilities of the Secretariat (led by the Steering committee) will include:

- coordinating communication and collaboration among the GPcwd’s members, registering new partners and managing the listserv,
- leading knowledge management for the Partnership, including maintaining the website and writing or at least monitoring the completion of the annual report,
- responsibilities for planning an annual meeting of the members,
The Steering Committee will be composed of 10 members, including representatives from IDA, IDDC, GPDD, IASG/UNPRPD and UNICEF as well as one representative from five other constituent groups including: government, child-focused INGO, research institution, the Secretariat, and the private sector.

The Advisory Council will be led by co-chairs. Procedures for selecting the members of the Steering Committee and the co-chairs will be established in the GPcwd Charter. The Steering Committee will work closely with the Secretariat in developing a fundraising strategy and will be responsible for oversight of the Task Forces including which should be added at each annual GPcwd meeting. The Steering Committee will have a virtual or in-person meeting at least once per year.

The Secretariat will also be responsible for. National Partnerships should include a diverse group of stakeholders from the relevant national context, including local and international donors, local and international NGOs and DPOs, government, UN agencies and the private sector. Ideally, they should mirror the representation of the Partnership. The full involvement of people with disabilities in the National Partnerships is critical to accomplish the goals of the GPcwd. The National Partnerships will decide which areas to focus their advocacy on and can, for example, channel their efforts by focusing on one or more of the global Task Force areas.

The Task Forces will be assessed annually by the Steering Committee and supported by both the Steering Committee and the Secretariat. Ideally, the Task Forces and the National Partnerships will work together at the country-level to make the Task Forces context-specific and connect the National Partnerships to the global dialogue.

Youth Councils will be established at the global and national level to ensure their engagement and central role in the Partnerships. The structure of the Councils will be developed by the Steering Committee in consultation with youth representatives and laid out in the Charter.
Under this structure, civil society, DPOs, government, academia, the UN and private sector should include children and adults with disabilities as well as their families all working together to influence child rights agenda and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

During the question and discussion period participants raised the importance that families of children with disabilities be given a “meaningful space” to have their voices heard as well. Similarly, there was a request to remember the need for DPOs to interact with the Partnership. These two points will be considered as the GPcwd moves forward with the new structure. Another participant articulated the need to establish standards to ensure equal partners in a structure that appears hierarchal. Clearly the partners voted for the least hierarchal structure that will permit the GPcwd to function efficiently and with more accountability with the different constituencies represented in the Steering Committee.

A draft mission statement was proposed reflecting the need “to galvanise and coordinate global and national efforts towards inclusive development with a focus on children with disabilities”. The mission statement was adopted without much discussion.

As an introduction to a proposed vision statement, Susana Sottoli, Deputy Director, Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement, Programme Division for UNICEF shared the main elements of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, recently approved by the UNICEF Executive Board. The four year Plan sets forth UNICEF’s priorities, strategies and opportunities and reaffirms the UNICEF mission as one that promotes the rights of every child everywhere with an emphasis on the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families. The Strategic Plan stresses the role of diversified partnerships similar to the GPwcd, with governments, civil society, private sector, academia, among others. Partnerships are central to the strategy of scaling up interventions that prove to be efficient and effective. The Plan also emphasises the need to enhance accountability of national institutions for effective police, programmes and services for children, all children, everywhere. These strategies are most appropriate in terms of disabilities and other drivers of exclusion.

Ms Sottoli’s intervention concluded with common strategies set out in the UNICEF Strategic Plan and the mission of GPwcd. Similarly, the proposed GPcwd Post-2015 vision for children with disabilities included some elements kindred to the recently approved UNICEF Strategic Plan:

- Children with disabilities are counted and have greater visibility in national data collection;
- Children with disabilities are safe from stigma, discrimination and other forms of violence;
- Children with and without disabilities are learning and playing together in regular schools;
Girls with disabilities have greater access and opportunities to realise their potential;
Concrete action by governments to ratify and progressively implement the CRC and the CRPD; and
Funding for humanitarian action take into account the needs of children and adults with disabilities and remove barriers instead of building new ones.

The plenary discussion that followed revealed support for the proposed vision as well as a desire to make the statements more general while, at the same time, some participants suggested that the statements be more detailed. It was therefore agreed to circulate the vision statements, as the basis for improvements, after the Forum for comments, consolidation and approval. The membership criteria will also be circulated for comments after the Forum.

5. Building an inclusive Post-2015 Development Agenda for Children

The session on building an inclusive Post-2015 Development Agenda for Children featured a short video produced by Plan International³, “Listen Up! Children with Disabilities Speak Out”, which bought the voices of children to the fore. Participants were connected to real lives and personal journeys of children and youth who demonstrated how inclusion can transform the lives of children with disabilities and give life to dreams and unrealised potential.

The discussion on the GPcwd Action Plan “Towards an Inclusive Development Agenda for All for 2014-2015” was co-moderated by Richard Morgan, Senior Advisor on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, UNICEF and Jenny Nilsson, President World Federation of Deaf Youth Section. GPcwd partners were surveyed for ideas on strategies and key activities for implementation of the 2014-2015 action plan. Three strategic areas emerged from this process:

1. Commitment and engagement of governments at global and national levels;
2. Participation and engagement of children and adults with disabilities; and,
3. Influencing public opinion through awareness-raising campaigns.

³ Plan International
Clear directions for the focus of the 2014-2015 action plan emerged with ideas on how the Partnership can take practical action in each of the three strategic areas.

**H.E. Ms. Inga Marte Thorkildsen, Minister of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, Norway** shared the experience of the Government of Norway. For many years Norway has pursued inclusive disability policies and plans learning that a proper legal framework together with sound methods for measuring results are vital to achieve sustainable results. A strong political will and the structured, regular cooperation with DPOs is basic to the Norwegian model of success. International cooperation represents the cornerstone in the CRPD and is needed to support and guide national obligations and effort to remove the barriers that prevent children with disabilities from fully realising their rights. Grounded in monetary statistics and indicators as core instruments, Norway prioritises the areas of health, education, gender equality, and humanitarian programmes to enhance inclusion. This package of interventions is accompanied by awareness raising efforts and improved reporting on efforts to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

"You can speak for us and our voice will be heard, but when we speak for ourselves, action will be taken". 
*Peter Ochieng, Uganda, African Youth with Disability Network (AYWDN)*

Before opening up to the plenary for discussion, H.E. Ms. Fatma Sahin, Minister of Family and Social Policies of Turkey gave another example of how government’s commitment can make a difference for children with disabilities.

Turkey has employed a holistic approach by providing free health insurance to each and every newborn until the age of 18, all children are provided with free access to school and technological opportunities. Turkey is restructuring all mass transport and public areas making them accessible for people with disabilities.

**Mr. Peter Ochieng, Uganda, African Youth with Disability Network (AYWDN),** introduced the AYWDN experience of engaging children in the partnership for children with disabilities. The use of internet, local news outlets and radio provide the format for their effort to give children a chance to speak for themselves. When providing a format for their voice to be heard through their own videos, it is essential to provide security for them, in some countries, to protect them from reprisals.

In many cases, effort is made for parents to accompany children throughout the preparation phase. Showing parents that their child with disabilities is a resource to the world, and not a burden, can inspire support to eliminate stigma and discrimination in families and communities. Sometimes role models are used to inspire and encourage children to speak out and act on their own behalf. AYWDN
organizes inclusive meetings where children, parents and communities benefit from open discussions about how children with disabilities feel and how they are touched by discrimination and stigma. Staying connected to the children and young people AYWDN works with allows for feedback and understanding how the actions taken are helping them to realize their rights.

**Mr. Rolando Villamero Jr., Young People and the Media:** Their Roles in including the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into the Post-2015 Agenda, shared experience from the work done in the Philippines focusing on advocacy campaigns. They organized parades bringing children with disabilities into the streets evoking questions and demonstrating that physical rehabilitation is not enough without social rehabilitation that brings about a paradigm shift in terms of concepts people have about disability. This event was followed-up with advocacy campaigns to accompany the change in perspective targeting communities, particularly young people. Radio programmes are designed to reach rural areas where many children with disabilities live and rural radio is the only media.

Print media and TV are also used to send innovative messages important to inspire a change in attitude about disabilities. National Autism Consciousness week was celebrated with the organization of a “flash mob for autism” in one of the malls in front of thousands of people. The same message is reinforced in follow-up messages delivered at community level.

Today, social media is one of the most effective tools used to communicate and change attitudes and behaviors. These activities require reflection and planning which can be done through the use of assessments and pilot testing (surveys, focus groups and key informant interviews) which helps to measure the level of awareness about disability before and after scheduled events. Changes recorded include: i) increase in parents willingness to voluntarily bring their child with disability out of the house where previously they faced humiliation and ridicule in their society and community; ii) a notable change in the use of inappropriate language and terms describing children with disabilities; iii) increased interest in disability – in one city the number of students registered for special education jumped to over 500 as more people became interested in working with children with disabilities; iv) increased number of rural radio programmes used to educate families and communities in remote rural areas. Most importantly, creative activities such as parades and flash mobs help to unify voices of advocates.

**Additional ideas from the floor suggested:**
Collect and publish good and promising practices from governments and civil society,
Develop guidelines for participation of children with disabilities,
Feature children with disabilities in events where they share their personal experiences and what can be changed or improved,
Conduct research about community involvement and inclusive social change,
Ensure children with disabilities are represented in DPOs,
Consider an information-sharing platform online for countries, member agencies to share their successes and failures with lessons learnt,
Produce profiles of children with disabilities who have struggled and overcome challenges, including their perspectives on a) what helped them, b) what they feel is further needed; and, c) their hope for children with disabilities. Share these profiles as inspiration along with a "best profile of the month",
As much as possible, awareness campaigns, media, and other social media initiatives must be made accessible to everyone, e.g. captions, video description, easy to read versions of complex documents,
Include voices of families and caregivers,
Special effort to include girls and young women as a cross-cutting concern,
To enhance government engagement encourage and support the placement of people with disabilities in government positions and/or caregivers for children with disabilities,
For increased family involvement, reach out to family/parents advocacy groups around the world to identify family members (including siblings) and put them in contact with each other for discussion and to bring their needs to the dialogue,
Consider discussing disability as a unifying category. All people experience disability in infancy, through injury, long or short term, and/or old age. This way the public sees disability issues as relatable,
Support emerging leaders as champions,
As a youth, I would like to see more self-advocacy,
Share more case studies and country-specific strategies,
Give more focus on filling the gap between DPO/people with disabilities from city, rural and remote areas,
Organize events with young leaders from around the world on stage for focused discussions on issues directly affecting them,
Organize training/orientation on gender issues for advocacy groups,
Focus effort on eliminating media-related stigma,
Prepare and circulate guidance on how to deal with governments who resist promoting legislation and policies that will improve the lives of people living with disabilities,
Target policy makers and political leaders with basic training/orientation about people living with disabilities,
Target older generation with awareness-raising activities,
Target religious leaders with awareness-raising activities,
➢ Develop and publish a code of conduct for media reporting on disability issues,
➢ Assist governments to increase investments (human and financial resources, leadership, administrative capacity) to help gather data on people with disabilities in order to better inform public policies,
➢ Assist government leaders to be more articulate on disability issues,
➢ Establish monthly column in local newspaper on disability issues.
➢ Organize media competition on disability issues.

The Forum devoted the largest segment of time to this session on building an inclusive Post-2015 Development Agenda for Children. The outcome of this session will be used to draft the 2014-2015 GPcwd Action Plan after the meeting which will be circulated for comment and finalized before the end of the year. The Forum discussed the different dimensions of exclusion on the one hand and inclusion on the other hand. Both are very complex and take place in many different situations in society (in the home, in community, schools, government, and private sector, among others). For children and young people, the discussion provided many examples of how to include their voices, their concerns, their interests, and how to address their rights. Participants illustrated ways in which children’s voices can be enhanced, ways in which society, including all social institutions, like media and movements can mobilise the interest of young people with disabilities, and how they themselves can mobilise.

“\textit{If we all agree that no one must be left behind in the new agenda, then the success or failure of our countries has to be measured by whether we include those people who are most excluded}.”

\textbf{Richard Morgan}

\textit{Senior Advisor on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, UNICEF}

Government commitment and engagement, participation of children and adults with disabilities, influencing public opinion and awareness-raising are all about the struggle to bring about a fundamental social transformation that would enable persons with disabilities to claim their rights. There is a need to put a monitoring system in place to measure progress of changing of attitudes, making discrimination and exclusion socially unacceptable, culturally unacceptable, and politically unacceptable. The use of indices is currently in practice for areas such as gender equality and children’s rights. The development of an index of inclusion was suggested using a set of criteria based on the CRPD and including countries that haven’t yet ratified the Convention. Such an index would facilitate ongoing assessments of how countries are performing in terms of including persons and young people with disabilities, as well as, encourage governments and civil society to work together to take action in specific areas. Permitting the comparisons between countries over time would help to better understand and target effort for improvement.
6. Global Action: how to promote an inclusive future for all

The final session of the Forum was co-moderated by Catherine Naughton, Chair of International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) and Maria Veronica Reina, Executive Director of the Global Partnership on Disability and Development (GPDD). In the effort to successfully galvanize and coordinate global and national efforts to influence the planning for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Partnership will need to cost and budget the GPcwd 2014-2015 action plan. This session examined the vital questions of responsibility, resources and commitments necessary to ensure that children with disabilities will be counted and have greater visibility across all emerging goals, targets and indicators.

Earlier sessions reviewed and appreciated the achievements and results of 2012-2013 Task Forces which were implemented with extremely limited resources. Nonetheless, the Partnership made significant achievements to both bring the issues of children and adults with disabilities to the forefront of major development initiatives (Omnibus, GPE and SOWC) and to build movements specific to the needs of persons with disabilities driven by governments, UN and civil society. The Partnership now has a governance structure, a logo, a mission statement, a proposed vision and emerging national partnerships that are innovative and responsive to the specific country needs. As defined by partners, a framework for the 2014-2015 GPcwd action plan exists with the three main strategic areas identified for action. All this was accomplished on the good will of partners who volunteered time and resources and the funds provided by UNICEF to operate the Secretariat.

With the successes, growth and development of the Partnership, there is an urgent need for funding, resources, leadership and renewed commitment for the GPcwd to strengthen and sustain its effort to ensure that disability issues are included in the Post-2015 Development agenda, targets and indicators. As a follow on from the previous session where discussion led to excellent ideas on what should go into the upcoming GPcwd action plan, this session served as a platform to discuss and identify strategic resource requirements and commitments around:

- Global advocacy
- National partnerships
- DPO participation at key events on Post-2015 Development Agenda
- Communication strategy
- Knowledge management
- Action research agenda on children and youth with disabilities
- Youth leadership, capacity, participation and development

The process of mapping contributions and comparative advantages of the different member partners in terms of resources, staff and leadership. Notable among the commitments announced are: UNICEF’s financial support for the functioning of the
Task Forces (250,000 USD); UNPRPD 100,000 USD to promote participation of DPOs; Human Rights Watch for a communication team and multimedia; and, the willingness to host national partnerships by World Vision International (10 countries) and Plan International Egypt (1). Dozens of organisations volunteered leadership including International Council of Education for People with Visual Impairment, Executive Council Federation of Disability, Inclusion International, IDDC, International Children’s Organization, Executive Council Federation of Disability, Uganda President African Youth with Disabilities Network, Mobility International, International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, World Vision International, International Center for Evidence of Disability, ILO, UNICEF, WHO, and UNESCO (see annex for details).

The exercise provided an excellent opportunity for partners to showcase their comparative advantage with nearly 20 partners from DPOs, NGOs, Government, UN and academia taking the floor to explain their area of expertise and offer to contribute. Many found this session useful in identifying potential partnerships for specific areas such as action-research, working on issues relevant to children with disabilities living in institutions, empowering youth with disabilities, self-advocacy movements, protection and disaster risk management and disabilities, jobs for youth with disabilities, etc. The process of identifying strategic resources and commitments continued after the Forum.

**Challenges**

The exercise of mapping and securing resources for the 2013-2015 GPwcd workplan will continue with a view to achieve the right mix of funds, resources and leadership to adequately respond to challenges identified during the GPcwd Forum:

- Ensure cross-sectoral coordination both among the GPcwd Task Forces and between the Task Forces and other networks, organisations and groups working on disability issues,
- Finding and guiding leadership on the ground for functional and effective National Partnerships on children and adults with disabilities,
- Maintaining transparency in everything the GPcwd does (task forces, governance, leadership, etc.) with respect to the principles of human rights and equity. Getting agreement on and distribution of membership criteria is an important priority,
- Building an efficient knowledge management strategy to facilitate sharing of the rich body of knowledge held by the collective Partnership and access to important information by all members,
Manage conflict of interest issues should they arise, particularly important to UNICEF and other big actors in the Partnership.

Conclusion

The 2013 GPcwd Forum was evaluated by the participants who greatly appreciated UNICEF’s effort to establish a good balance between the presentations and opportunities for the audience to participate. This was accomplished despite the challenges in terms of a charged agenda and only one day to cover the substantive material over the four working sessions. This coupled with the difficult logistics presented by the split space where 279 participants were located limited networking and time for interaction.

Ninety-five percent of those completing the evaluation forms rated the overall success of the Forum as excellent or good. Many noted the “sessions that provided concrete examples most useful” and “sessions focused on personal experiences very illuminating”. A dozen respondents commented that the presentations were excellent although there was too little time allocated for discussions. When asked to identify the most appreciated session, the four sessions scored equally well with a slight preference for the fourth session which many saw as “highly interactive” and focused more on generating a specific roadmap for GPcwd. Participants commented on an important level of excitement for the future of the Partnership with hopes expressed for keeping the momentum going beyond planning to action would.

Participants encouraged the involvement of youth for self-advocacy and indicated the importance of research led by children and young persons with disabilities.

Nearly all evaluation comments demonstrated a great enthusiasm for the work ahead and the continued commitment for Partnership effort to ensure justice for children and adults with disabilities in the new goals, targets and indicators.