Dear Partners,

The April 2017 Newsletter of the Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities (GPcwd) has arrived! In this edition we would like to draw your attention to some major developments as well as upcoming events in 2017.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

### Updates from the GPcwd Task Forces

#### ECD Task Force

ECDtf was convening in New York, Washington, and Thimphu, Bhutan, this spring, creating significant opportunities both for current members to consult on ongoing projects and for new members to get oriented. The ECDtf group convene meet-ups at diverse international conferences where several ECDtf members are typically on the program, and new colleagues likely to share our mission can be engaged.

Diverse stakeholders and partners gathered in Bhutan for [www.andd2017.org](http://www.andd2017.org) in April, the International Conference on Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders. The overall theme of the conference was **developing effective and sustainable multi-sectorial programs for individuals, families and communities living with ASD and other neurodevelopmental disorders.** Three ECDtf leaders addressing the conference - Evey Cherow, Vibha Krishnamurthy, and Andy Shih – will convene the ECDtf meet-up during the conference.

ECDtf was featured at a session on “Consensus Building for SDG Success.” Our engagement with global initiatives to promote inclusion and early intervention will exemplify the processes of "connecting-the-dots" between the CRC and CRPD at the [2017 Institute of the Center for Education Diplomacy](http://www.centerforeducationdiplomacy.org), 22 April 2017, Washington DC, USA.
On March 31, 2017, World Autism Awareness Day featured presentations by ECDtf members at two High-Level Panels at UN Headquarters, “Toward Autonomy and Self-determination” and “Populations in movement: Addressing the opportunities and challenges to ensure care and services to migrants with Autism and developmental disabilities.” We were especially pleased that Walter Suskind, member of our ECDtf Family Engagement Task Team, presented on progress with his Brothers & Sisters support and advocacy platform for siblings of children with disabilities, following the Academy-Award nominated film documenting his family’s experience, Life Animated http://www.lifeanimateddoc.com

ECDtf members Evey Cherow and Emily Vargas Baron participated in the American Academy of Pediatrics coalition on the Global Agenda for Young Children, designing policy and planning advocacy to maintain children as an international development priority for the USA government. The coalition had a very successful lobbying US Capital Hill day on March 23, teaming up with representatives of 12 organizations visiting 25 offices in both houses and both sides of the aisle. With representatives from the education, maternal and child health, nutrition, and child protection communities, they made a strong and unique case for sustained funding, and explained how interventions within and across accounts can help lead to more efficient and effective programs and a more stable, prosperous world.

The ECDtf joins the Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts. This initiative brings together UN agencies, civil society, human rights institutions, donors and the private sector. The initiative is to create a constituency of actors that can support the translation of the commitments in the New York Declaration, adopted in September 2016 at the high-level Summit for Refugees and Migrants, into action that genuinely protects children.

RISE Institute, under the leadership of Emily Vargas-Baron, is analyzing data received from the Global Inclusive ECD and ECI survey. The results of the survey should be available in July.

Please see recent ECDtf newsletters on the GPcwd website for more details on LINK, or contact ECDtf coordinator donald.wertlieb@tufts.edu to get involved.
Physical Activity and Sport Task Force

2017 may well be the year that marks a sea change in action towards inclusion of children with disabilities in physical activity and sport. This relates to two significant global UNESCO initiatives, MINEPSVI in July and Quality Physical Education (QPE) preparing for post pilot actions in September. Both of these endeavors have the capacity to transform inclusion in Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport enabling positive impacts in cross cutting policy agendas impacting on health and wellbeing, education, social inclusion, justice, environment and economy.

MINEPS VI – UNESCO's Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport takes place in July 2017 in Kazan, Russia. MINEPS VI is focused on actions that can be taken to advance the realization of the vision expressed in the Berlin Declaration, UNESCO's Charter, and the Sustainable Development Goals, CRPD and CRC. The GPcwd Thematic Paper (2015) Disability Inclusive Physical Activity and Sport in the Post 2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals [link](http://www.gpcwd.org/uploads/2/6/0/9/26097656/gpcwd_thematic_paper_on_physical_activity.pdf) is very pertinent in this regard.

The GPcwd Physical Activity and Sport Taskforce are really excited about the work that is progressing with both MINEPS and QPE. Many members of this taskforce are in the process of developing resources and tools that can play an active role globally in supporting the action oriented impact focus priorities identified by UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Committee of Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS) in defining the MINEPS themes.

This taskforce also believes strongly in the essential role of QPE as a foundation for lifelong life-wide participation for all people including those with disabilities and other marginalized groups. QPE has been designed to embrace inclusion and its effective implementation supports and compliments action and provision across physical activity and sport. IPEPAS (Inclusive Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport) is being developed by the UNESCO Chair in Tralee to support this implementation. Collaboration is welcome on this initiative.

The GPcwd are most grateful to UNESCO, CIGEPS, and the Permanent Consultative Council and MINEPS Working groups for their vision, hard work, passion and foresight in reorienting the emphasis of MINEPSVI to an action an impact focus. The guidelines, direction and resources produced and curated by UNESCO and MINEPS VI signpost governments and practitioners across the world in the right direction. This taskforce is optimistic for inclusion as a result of the actions taken to date and are ready to take action to support positive inclusive actions in whatever way we can, wherever we can.

Contact details: Catherine Carty, Chair, GPcwd Physical Activity and Sport Taskforce. [Catherine.Carty@staff.ittralee.ie](mailto:Catherine.Carty@staff.ittralee.ie)

[Read the story behind the “Circle of Friends” picture](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B3j4SezqaJd1TzZsR3NzRl9FT2M)
Leadership and Mentoring Task Force

The task force is currently analyzing the results of two surveys: youth needs assessment on the leadership and mentoring opportunities and the mapping of organizations that provide opportunities for youth. The report will be available in August 2017.

Contact details: Genelle Thomas gthomas@pyd.org

NEWS FROM THE GPCWD MEMBERS
Leadership School for an Inclusive Development – META

Daniela Gordon, member of the GPcwd Youth Council: “On December, 2016, META had their 4th youth reunion, which took place in the Dominican Republic. Part of the meeting was celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities, December 3rd. Youth participated from United States, Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay.

Some of the projects presented include “Just Tell Me” (Decímeloo a mí), a successful project on reproductive and sexual health that produced accessible videos for deaf youth in three signal languages - Argentinean, Uruguayan and Costa Rican. Daniela Gordon, META member, presented her participation at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in Istanbul, Turkey and also introduced the GPcwd to META. Camila Ramírez presented her participation on Mobility International USA (MIUSA) and Germán Tourón on his participation at the review of the CRPD on Geneva, Switzerland.

Their hard work for inclusion and their unparalleled happiness is what makes META a school of youth leaders with and without disabilities for the same struggle.

Prepared by Daniela Gordon, META Costa Rica.

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) issued a position paper on language rights for deaf children

As stated in the letter of the WFD President Colin Allen: “The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) is an international non-governmental organisation which promotes the human rights of deaf people worldwide. An important part of the work is the promotion of the rights of deaf people, including deaf-blind people and deaf people with disabilities, to an education in their native indigenous sign language(s). The need for natural language acquisition in sign language is crucial for all deaf people”.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) commits governments to recognizing the importance of sign languages and promoting their use. The UN CRPD also entitles deaf people, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture. Being allowed to develop their cultural and linguistic identities – including in educational settings – is a key right of deaf children.

Special Olympics: European Football Week: 27 May – 4 June, 2017

Supported by Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) since 2000, Special Olympics European Football Week is an annual highlight on the movement’s calendar. It is supported by a host of national football federations as well as hundreds of professional clubs.

Special Olympics’ European Football Week is one of our movement’s flagship annual events. Each year, with the help of UEFA and sponsor MetLife, thousands of players of all ages take part in matches across the continent. In doing so, these players, some with intellectual disabilities, some without, demonstrate to the world that inclusion through sport is an achievable goal.

From 27 May to 4 June 2017, 45,000 players will lace up their boots and take to football pitches across Europe and Eurasia. The focus of the event in 2017 is youth, with Under 12’s Unified football a key focus. Special Olympics’ invites you to celebrate this event and support the unique power of football to break down barriers!


Leonard Cheshire Disability: 1,000 children with disabilities in Tanzania will access education for the first time


UNICEF video Voices of Adolescents

UNICEF asked over 100 adolescents globally to talk about their priorities, their asks from duty bearers and hopes for the future. Watch the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeBF2wn7gek
**JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

Handicap International
- Program Coordinator – EGYPT: deadline for submission of applications 07/05/2017
- Area Coordinator - North Hub, Turkey: deadline for submission of applications 12/05/2017
http://www.handicap-international.us/current_vacancies

UNICEF Cambodia
- Consultancy: Development of Identification Tools for People with Disability including children with disability, Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Deadline for submission of applications 08/05/2017

UNICEF Kosovo
- International Expert for development of training program on Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) centers and to increase the training and technical capacities of the CBR staff and other relevant professionals and parents for providing equitable opportunities for children with disabilities in Kosovo: Deadline for submission of applications 10/05/2017
https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B3j4SezqaJd1N2lrQl9ZRFVoN3M

UNICEF Mozambique
- Individual consultant to support Ministry of Education and Human Development with evidence-based planning and programming for Inclusive education (120 working days spread over seven months with maximum of 3 in-country missions. Deadline: 19/05/2017
https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B3j4SezqaJd1c2ZvU05KOHlRMFU

**NEW RESOURCES**

**picture 1:** Screenshot of the music video

UNICEF video to mark 6 year of Syrian conflict. The song is performed by 10 year-old Ansam, an internally displaced girl in Syria who was born blind. The song was shot in an area of Syria heavily damaged by the fighting. Children performing as part of the choir are all internally displaced and participate, along with Ansam, in UNICEF psychosocial support programmes. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQSqFV1yeeg

**Source – International Online Resource Centre on Disability and Inclusion**

One of the best sources for disability related resources is Handicap International’s Source online resource center - http://www.asksource.info/. They also provide email updates on new resources in the sector. The latest newsletter, which you can subscribe to, can be found here: http://www.asksource.info/page/e-bulletin
Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities

UNICEF India has developed a guidebook, *Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities*, with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Samarthyam, a Disabled Persons Organization (DPO), as part of the Prime Minister’s Accessible India Campaign. Aimed at school administrators, school management committees and parents, the guidebook details the common infrastructural barriers children with disabilities may face within schools and offers possible solutions to address these barriers. A checklist is included, which can be used as a tool to assess the accessibility of schools and to identify areas needing improvement. Clear standards and specifications are provided, with photos and illustrations, which can be used with civil works personnel, towards making necessary changes or during construction.

Lancet article on disability in Greece refugee camps


UNICEF: A new way to measure child functioning

Worldwide, efforts to include children with disabilities have been hindered by a lack of reliable and relevant data on their lives. To address this gap, UNICEF has been working with the Washington Group on Disability Statistics – a UN city group established under the United Nations Statistical Commission – to develop a new way of collecting data on children with disabilities that is devoid of labels and diagnoses.

The new Module on Child Functioning, released in October 2016, covers children between 2 and 17 years of age and assesses functional difficulties in different domains including hearing, vision, communication/comprehension, learning, mobility and emotions. The questions can be incorporated into existing data collection efforts and address the need for nationally comparable and internationally harmonized data. The module is now included in the current round of the UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey programme (MICS) that will be implemented in more than 35 low- and middle-income countries over the next three years. The survey can be used in any household surveys or census.

Many have contributed to this work in the spirit of partnership, from national governments and statistical offices to DPOs, researchers, and families. UNICEF looks forward to continued partnerships to make sure children with disabilities are counted. [Learn more about the module](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lj6iqkkaSGQ). Watch video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lj6iqkkaSGQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lj6iqkkaSGQ)

and every child is entitled to equal opportunity
PAST AND FUTURE EVENTS

10th session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD, 13 to 15 June 2017, New York

The theme of the 10th COSP is “The Second Decade of the CRPD: Inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the implementation of the Convention.”

Sub-themes are:

- Addressing the impact of multiple discrimination on persons with disabilities and promoting their participation and multi-stakeholder partnerships for achieving the SDGs in line with the CRPD;
- Inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action;
- Promoting inclusive urban development and implementation of the New Urban Agenda – Habitat III

For more information, please visit the UN DESA website

FDIE: Africa in Developing World Context, 28-30 June 2017, Johannesburg, South Africa

- This Family Centered Early Intervention Conference will explore the theme: Creative strategies, programmes and innovations, facilitating the practical implementation and practice of Family Centred Early Intervention, in the Developing World

More information about this meeting https://www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/fcei2017/welcome/

UNICEF Workshop on the Measurement of Disability

UNICEF is continuing to support capacity building on disability data collection for DPOs through the delivery of another Workshop on the Measurement of Disability. The workshop will be held on the Friday after the COSP, June 16th for one day only. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

If you are interested in this initiative, or know anyone who is planning to attend the conference of states parties this year, and if you have financial capacity to extend your stay for one more day, please contact Asma Maladwala directly by May 12th to confirm your registration or with any questions. Asma can be reached on amaladwala@unicef.org

Concept Note: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B3j4SezqaJd1aEJyMFVuT3p2ZEE

Women and girls with disabilities at CSW61

The 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW61) took place at the UN Headquarters from 13 to 24 March 2017 under the priority theme: “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work.” During CSW61, key side-events were supported by United Nations Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), including “Advancing the Leadership of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Development and Society: Networking Workshop” and “Between Gender, Disability and Economic Empowerment”. In its Agreed Conclusions on “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work,” the CSW expressed concern about the low labour force participation rate of women with disabilities. It called for measures to ensure that women with disabilities have access to decent work in the public and private sectors. It further called for labour markets and work environments to be open, and take positive measures to increase the employment of women with disabilities, as well as eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. The advance unedited text of the Agreed Conclusions is available at: http://bit.ly/csw61_crpd.

DESA: Expert meeting on monitoring and evaluation of disability-inclusive development

The Expert Meeting on Monitoring and Evaluation for Disability-inclusive Development will be held from 10 to 11 May 2017 at ILO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting organized by DESA and hosted by ILO, is intended to take stock of progress made in monitoring and evaluation for disability-inclusive development, in particular in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Discussions will contribute to preparation of the 2018 United Nations flagship report on disability and development that has been requested by the UN General Assembly (A/RES/69/142). The meeting will include experts, researchers and practitioners from the UN system, academic institutions, Member States, non-governmental organizations, particularly DPOs, and development partners with experience and expertise in the areas of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the international development goals, including expertise in policy-
Recognizing the rights of people with autism to make their own decisions

World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD, 2 April) was commemorated at UN Headquarters on Friday, 31 March under the theme "Toward Autonomy and Self-Determination". The WAAD observance discussed policies and approaches being implemented with regard to guardianships and the right to self-determination and legal capacity of persons with autism. The CRPD recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to independence of person and to individual autonomy. It also highlights the right of persons with disabilities to "legal capacity on an equal basis with others and in all aspects of life". The WAAD event discussed policies and approaches being implemented with regard to guardianships and the right to self-determination and legal capacity of persons with autism. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56478

World Down Syndrome Day observed at UN Headquarters

As part of the global initiatives held around the world to commemorate World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD), the 6th annual World Down Syndrome Day Conference was held at UN Headquarters on 21 March. The Conference was organized by Down Syndrome International (DSi) and an international network of stakeholders that focused on enabling people with Down syndrome to speak up, as well as those who advocate for them. The event aimed to influence Government and policy-makers to act toward the inclusion of people with Down syndrome, on a full and equal basis with others, in all aspects of society. To commemorate WDSD, at the UN Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, a self-advocacy workshop and an "open dialogue" was held along with policy-makers and other stakeholders. (#MyVoiceMyCommunity; https://worlddownsyndromeday.org/)

Announcement

Should your organization is organizing an event or doing project that requires partnership, please send the a short text (200 words max) to the GPCwd Secretariat at avuryaeva@unicef.org and we’ll include relevant updates to July newsletter

Thank you for all your commitment to protect the rights of children with disabilities!

GPCwd Secretariat