

## **Guidance for Establishing a National Partnership on Children with Disabilities (NPcwd)**

The Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities (GPcwd) is a network of more than 575 individuals representing over 240 organizations, including international and local NGOs, Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs), governments, academia and the private sector, working to advance the rights of children with disabilities at the global, regional and country levels. The GPcwd was established and had its first Global Forum in New York City, in September 2012. UNICEF has been acting as the Secretariat of the GPcwd. For more information and reports please go to [http://www.unicef.org/disabilities/index\\_65319.html](http://www.unicef.org/disabilities/index_65319.html).

In line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the partnership provides a platform for advocacy and collective action to ensure the rights of children with disabilities are included in and prioritized by both the disability agenda and child-focused agendas.

While the partners are working together at the global level on advocacy, **country level collaboration is encouraged to enhance coordination and results among the local partners and establish new relationships** in line with the overarching objectives for the GPcwd which include:

1. To integrate the rights of children with disabilities into the disability agenda and child-focused agendas; and
2. To advocate for an inclusive approach to development that acknowledges children and disability.

**The general objective of the NPcwd is to raise the profile of the rights of children with disabilities** to meet the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (Post 2015) through national and local level networking, knowledge management, advocacy and communications activities. The NPcwd aims as well to ensure that the voices of people with disabilities are heard.

### **Specific objectives:**

- ✓ Identify what are the key challenges/opportunities at country level for children with disabilities
- ✓ Agree critical country common objectives and specific action plan, or framework of results, etc. and suggested time frame, resources needed, etc.
- ✓ Establish and seek legislative endorsement for a coherent policy and legal framework for CwD at the country level
- ✓ Leverage international cooperation in country level following Article 32 of the CPRD

**The role of the GPcwd Secretariat** in support to national partnerships includes:

- ✓ Promoting horizontal cooperation
- ✓ Knowledge management
- ✓ Providing Technical guidance
- ✓ Documenting good practices

**When establishing a national partnership on children with disabilities, here are some things to consider:**

- The partnership should focus on advancing the rights of children with disabilities.
- National partnerships should be country-specific and at the same time linked to the dialogue at the global level, thus ensuring the national partnership is relevant to the local context and both benefiting and contributing to the broader discourse.
- Like the global partnership, a national partnership should include a diverse group of partners including local and international donors, local and international CSOs and DPOs, government, and UN agencies to enhance the reach and influence.
- The participation of persons with disabilities is critical to enhance the voices of children and adolescents and frame the discourse.
- The convener of the partnership does not necessarily have to be a major implementing organization or funder, rather be willing to bring the parties together to ensure the issues are getting addressed.
- The role of the convener will focus on the following:
  - To develop and implement an annual national programme of action
  - To act as the focal point for coordination of the NPCwd members
  - To contribute to regional and inter-regional activities
  - To identify and mobilize national-level resources
  - To report to the Secretariat on the use of resources and impact of activities, on national progress and on GPcwd contribution and recommended strategic direction for future contributions and activities.
  - The convener will also be in touch with the GPcwd Secretariat on realities of issues for children with disabilities in the specific country context. S/he may also attend conferences, training sessions, and other events on behalf of the national partnership, and serve as spokespersons in the media.
- Exchange of experience and information between the global partnership and national partnership will foster increased collaboration and scale up advocacy efforts.

It is recommended that the national partnership should:

- Conduct a rapid assessment to determine the current situation for children with disabilities in the country. This may include reviewing policies on or relating to children with disabilities, if the country has ratified the CRPD, if there is a National Plan of Action on Disability or Children, what national policies include for children with disabilities for example in education, health, or child protection.
- Consider centering the efforts on one or more of the four areas the global partnership is focusing on: education, nutrition, humanitarian action and assistive technologies. (see the weblink on [Thematic areas](#) of the GPcwd).
- Agree on a modality for working: have the group decide if the partnership should be formally established or if it should be an informal network; what will be the primary means of communication; and, how the activities will be supported.
- Stress the importance that programme strategies and operational procedures should be harmonized with national and sector plans (by using as much as possible existing national structures and avoiding the use of parallel implementation structures). Where the existing strategies do not adequately reflect pressing children with disabilities' priorities, to work with all partners to ensure their inclusion
- Develop a mechanism to monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership. It is recommended to develop a standardized format of reporting procedures
- Share experiences and accomplishments with the global GPcwd Secretariat for mutual learning and exchange: [gpcwd@unicef.org](mailto:gpcwd@unicef.org).

